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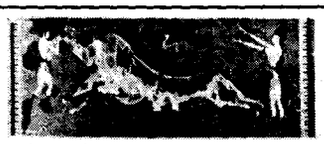

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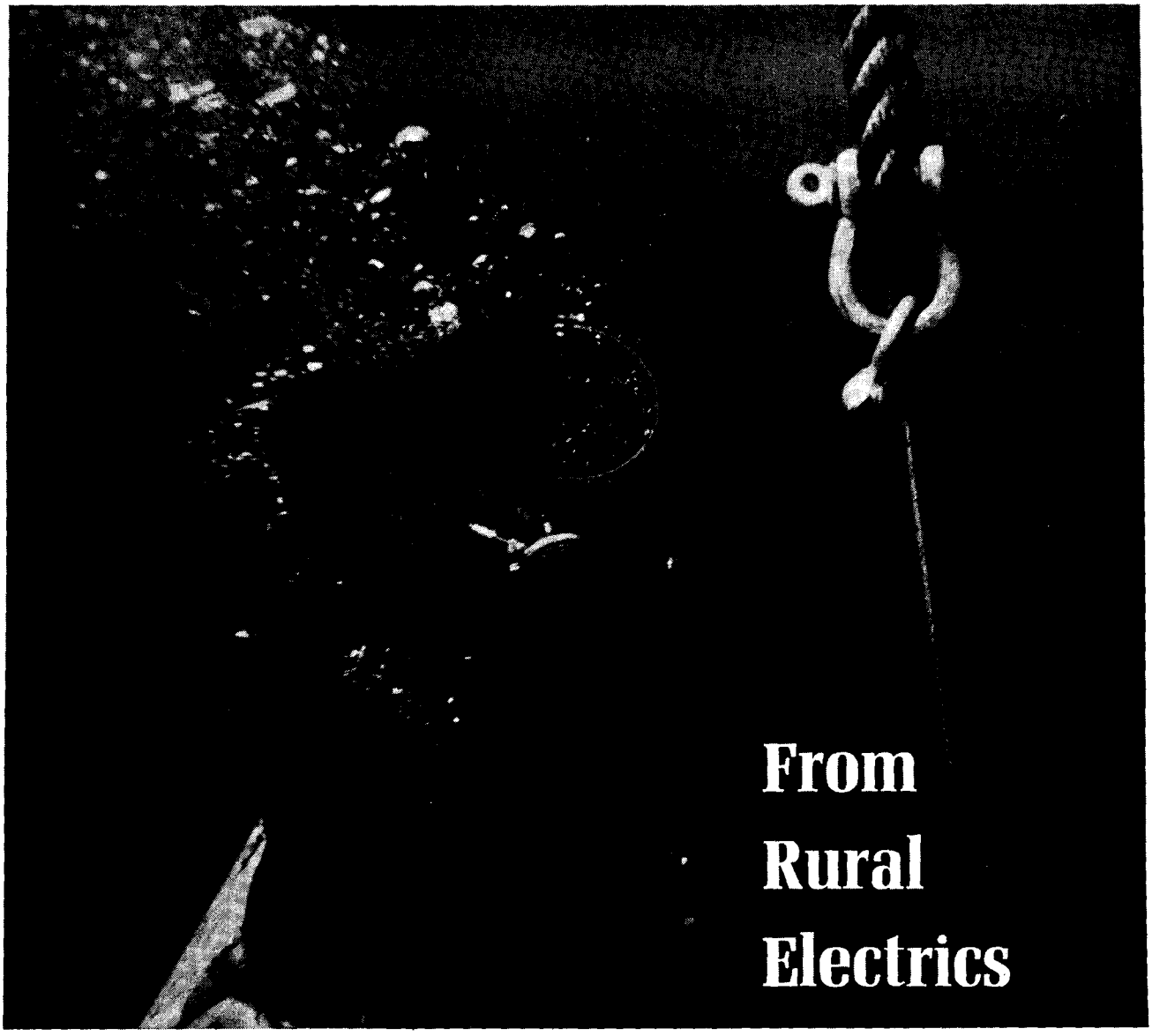

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T.R.B. *from Washington*

LBJ and Westmoreland

★ Spring, 1967. Washington a-burst with bloom; drenched with doubt. There is no end of it; you try to discern a meaning, wrestle with individual scenes.

The great banquet room of the Sheraton Park, for example: an ear-shattering amplifying system makes a pretty singer rumble like Niagara; comedian Victor Borge competently takes command of the shambles. Suddenly he announces that the President will arrive "in three minutes." Fanfare, spotlights; Hubert Humphrey smiles gamely – another speech down the drain.

There LBJ stands now, thin graying locks brushed back, large ears, large nose . . . looking wan; lights glittering on glasses. He uses an old routine, always amusing: as one President to another he advises the newly elected head of the White House Correspondents Association of the trials before him; some hits are witty; it is a rare example of Mr. Johnson kidding himself. He is playing the muted and subdued role, as sincere for him at the moment as he will be in his next volatile change (though where the real begins and ends nobody knows). . . . A quick change of pace from raillery to solemnity about the war; an implied appeal for sympathy; then he departs. It is all over in 10 minutes. "And how do I follow that act?" asks comedian Borge. . . .

Or take Gen. Westmoreland's visit. A field commander has come direct from battle to address Congress for the first time. Outside, the Capitol is ringed with police in case of demonstrations (an irony in itself). Inside the mood is strange, the audience self-conscious; this is not the normal, merry partisan rally – how do you equate respect for a military commander with uncertainty about a war? Hawks register enthusiasm, doves pat hands to show there is nothing personal, all applaud any reference to sons at the front.

The general has muted his criticism of "unpatriotic acts." The reporter from force of habit jots down meticulous as "me-tick-lous," calculated – "calkerlated," continue, "continyuh." Is this a possible presidential candidate? On Vietnam he identifies himself completely with the Administration, no issue there; his other views are as unknown as Ike's were before 1952. Under certain political eventualities he might be nominated as well as anyone else, given America's passionate penchant for generals. But can a Hero come from this wicked little war? . . . Well, anyway, we have seen the man, square-shouldered, square-jawed and sure of himself as a commander should be, with the rugged face of a farmer from South Carolina, from whence he comes, who says that "in three years of close study and daily observation [in Vietnam] I have seen no evidence that this is an internal insurrection." He is interrupted 21 times by applause, with an ovation at the end.

The general leaves things outwardly much as they were except that everywhere emotion is intensified; there is a phosphor gleam on the military now; patriotism has been thrown into the scales of the war controversy to accompany a great battlefield enlargement.

Filibuster Repeat

★ And now a scene that has nothing to do with Vietnam at all and is only included to show that the ancient political life flows on, war or no war. Bumptious, brawling Russell Long, son of the murdered Kingfish, steps to the front of the Senate and there is a pause to see what he will say. It is one of those great moments that occur rarely: nearly every Senate seat is filled; 100 clerks and attendants line the rear wall; a vote has just been taken, a vote that has given Long a stinging defeat, 52-46. The Senate wants to get on with the so-called "emergency" tax bill that has been bogged down in the chamber for 40 days as Long twists it in parliamentary knots.

They have played a trick on him; he got the controversial $60 million presidential election campaign financing act of 1966 enacted by making it a non-germane rider to a tax bill; now its opponents are trying to kill it by the same device. This bullying assistant majority leader who hides parliamentary brilliance under his bumpkin face and country-boy manner is fighting for its life. He has astonished colleagues by his ruthless attacks, involving even courtly Mike Mansfield, the official Democratic leader. He proclaims that his huge federal campaign subsidy will end the role of rich contributors forever – make it possible for "any boy born in the bullrushes; yes, for any boy born in a manger," to become President. You can't laugh him off either, because he is entrenched as chairman of the gift-giving Finance Committee. There is a power vacuum in the Senate; Long moves to fill it.

Cool Insolence

★ Ruined Tom Dodd (D, Conn.) flits wraithlike through the assembly; Long boldly says he will back him against censure. So now they wait to see if Long will yield. Left hand in pocket, right hand twirling glasses, with cool insolence he begins his filibuster all over again. There is a second's disbelief, then a murmur of incredulity and irritation rising from all over the hall. Mr. Long isn't going to quit until he has struck a bargain. . . .

Last of all, the scene is the Senate corridor as reporters buttonhole Republicans over the new GOP staff report on Vietnam. Let nobody doubt it; this is the finger to future events, the image forming in the crystal sphere. The message is terse: Democrats got us into this war and they lack the capacity to get us out. Support the war – 100 percent – but heap your frustration on the White House! Senator Aiken (R, Vt.), a venerated figure, said solemnly, "I have become convinced that the present Administration cannot achieve an honorable peace in Vietnam." We think this is the issue, very likely the *winning* issue, of 1968. We see this line being taken, almost inevitably, by almost any Republican candidate.

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The Indecent Society

More people are smoking pot and more of them are getting arrested, losing their jobs, going to jail. You don't have to smoke or sell marijuana to get hurt. Joel Fort, psychiatrist, author and director of San Francisco's Center for Special Problems (drugs, sex, alcohol) was fired last month after he was accused of being too permissive toward marijuana and LSD. Last week another author, Leslie Fiedler, was arrested in Buffalo for "maintaining premises" where marijuana was used, and may lose his professorship at the State University. Joel Carnowsky was arrested in Holyoke, Massachusetts, and charged with breaching the peace, for distributing literature saying pot should be legalized.

In Colorado the law says a person can be executed – put to death by potassium cyanide gas – for a second conviction of selling marijuana to anyone under 25. Nobody's been executed yet; in fact, the Colorado courts have a bad name with the Federal Narcotics Bureau for being reluctant to convict or impose heavy penalties in pot cases. But attempts to reduce the legal penalties for selling pot in Colorado have failed and the Bureau would like the University of Colorado to crack down on the college paper for editorializing for pot.

Smith Kline & French Laboratories, the firm that makes all those Bennies and Dexies that millions of adult pillheads use, has joined the National Education Association in a book, *Drug Abuse: Escape to Nowhere*, that advises schoolteachers how to cooperate with the authorities on nabbing youthful potheads. "Where to go to get help," the book calls it. What such help can involve is shown by the Seattle case of Kerrigan Gray, arrested in the University district on his 22nd birthday after being tricked into selling pot to undercover agents of the Seattle police narcotics division, and now serving a 20-year sentence in the state prison at Walla Walla, where he spent the first 14 months in "maximum security."

After 30 years of federal antipot legislation, and 10 years after federal penalties were raised to ferocious levels, no one has shown that marijuana is more hazardous than martinis. It's no longer seriously claimed that it's addictive or that it leads to use of addictive drugs. Yet the Commissioner of the Federal Narcotics Bureau says that permissiveness toward pot is "just another effort to break down our whole American system." And, in a way, he's right. The pleasures of pot are dubious. The kick is small. If the stuff were made as available as ordinary cigarettes or with no greater legal restrictions than there are on alcohol, its use might or might not become more wide-

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spread, and it wouldn't matter all that much. Many, maybe most, young pot smokers are motivated in part by an urge to violate laws which are discriminatory and unjust, passed and self-righteously upheld by a society they don't believe in any longer. Putting it politically, many of them would be less inclined toward pot if they still had a John F. Kennedy, else why did Harvard seniors once prefer the Peace Corps to Big Business? What they have instead is a middle-class morality that is much more obsessional and hysterical about pot than about killing of civilians in Vietnam (by our side, or by the Viet Cong), or about its sons' experiences either on the battlefield or in the packed whorehouses of Saigon and Bangkok.

It isn't just Vietnam, though. The war is only one of the indecent society's ugly faces. There's all the hypocrisy and corruption at home, in Congress, the House and the Senate, state legislatures, giant firms and giant federal agencies. In disgusted response, defiance stalks the campuses, but – all the more an affront to a pushy older generation's mores – its banner, love; its bearing, humble. Pot is withdrawal. There are few ideologues on campus. Aims are modest. Paul Goodman has said, "Perhaps the best we can do is to provide a decent society in which people can be themselves and children can grow up with their lively curiosity not too stultified."

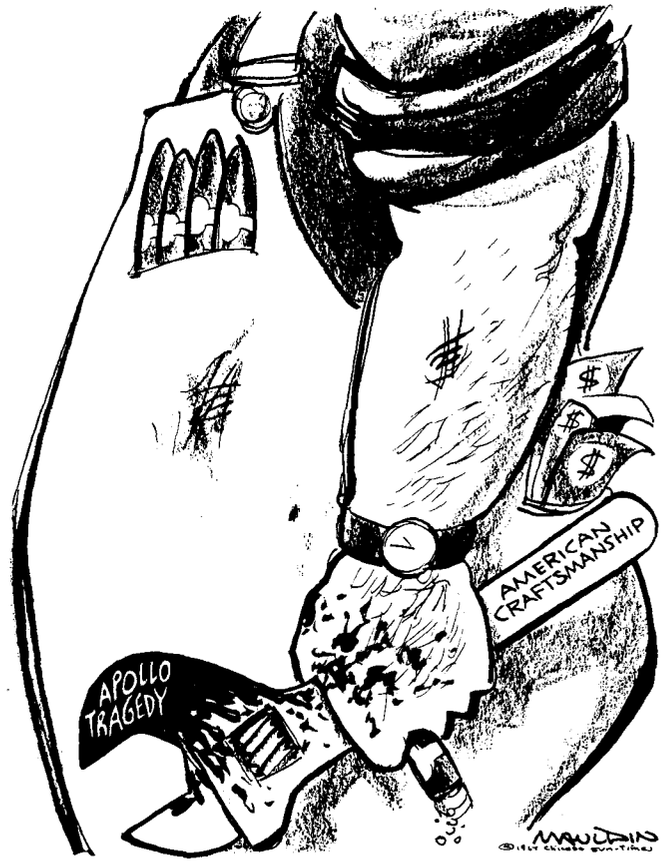
Meanwhile, of course, a decent society is just what people *don't* get. Instead, one that's stripped of everything that might distract from efficient technology – and then, big unfunny joke, isn't efficient. How can kids do other than despise the moralizing, humorless managers of the Great Society when most things go wrong in the society they manage? Pot may be sweeping the campuses, but there is a moral infection abroad in the country, and it isn't coming from the young people. Whoever ought to be behind bars in Walla Walla is over 24.

Apollo

Things were badly wrong long before three astronauts died in Apollo in January.

Back in 1965, General Samuel Phillips, the Apollo program director, was using phrases like grave situation, ineffective planning, unsolved problems, continual failure; and Thomas R. Baron, a North American Aviation expert, found much laxity in the work on Apollo. Baron was fired shortly before the astronauts died, but last month the Apollo Review Board said his strictures were substantially correct. Congressman William F. Ryan of New York, a member of the House Science and Astronautic Committee, says that on April 11, North American president J. L. Atwood testified that "General Phillips has not given us a copy of any report"; but that on December 19, 1965, Phillips sent 10 copies of his critical notes to Atwood with a covering letter. The letter said, "I could not find a substantial basis for confidence in future performance." Phillips himself told Congress last month that by early 1966 most of the alleged deficiencies had been put right; but the Apollo Review Board still reported flaws like this: "300 materials do not meet [flammability test] criteria. . . . 650 have no status as to acceptability." Congressman Ryan challenged the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to publish Phillips' 1965 criticism; but when NASA *didn't*, then the congressman did.

All this implies that if Phillips' and Baron's warnings had been treated with real seriousness the astronauts might not have died. The astronauts' trainer, Donald K. Slayton, told Congress that the "success" of the program had created "a false sense of security" but now "things that were wrong are going to be fixed." Really? Why weren't they during the 13 months between Phillips' reporting and the tragedy? Astronaut Grissom reportedly hung a lemon at the door of the ill-fated spacecraft to show what he thought of it; Apollo never was tested on the ground minus men, an omission *now*



Death Weapon

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admitted to have been "one of the gravest errors we ever made."

Russia has lost an astronaut in turn. Unwieldy programming and bureaucratic arrogance and muddle are to be expected there. In its anxiety to beat the Bolsheviks to the moon, this country imitates their style. Phillips' critique recommended that "incentivization of the S-II program should be delayed." "Incentivization," indeed. In this atmosphere of gobbledygook, thought and reality lose their edge. NASA's ability to manage the $23 billion moon program is now in doubt.

Congressman Joseph E. Karth said last month that NASA exceeds some of its own cost estimates tenfold, yet is blithely talking of a manned landing on Mars by 1985 that may cost anywhere between $200 billion and $600 billion. NASA Administrator James E. Webb's part explanation of why things went awry at Cape Kennedy on January 27 is that his agency got $2.5 billion too little over the past five years.

They're All Afraid of America

How the Europeans See the War

Vienna

More than half a century ago, imperial Vienna was the symbol of Western domination over Eastern Europe. Now it is the capital of the neutral Austrian republic. Crowds of Poles and Hungarians disembark every day from buses and trains, carrying vodka bottles, salami sausages and Russian cameras which they hope to barter against woolen sweaters and nylon shirts owned by Rumanians, Czechs, Bulgarians, Yugoslavs.

Vienna is a good observation post for the whole of East Europe. And the first thing one learns is that the war in Vietnam is seen to be as great a calamity for these people as for Americans. A Polish trading official said: "We can't help fearing that sooner or later Vietnam will become a second Korea. We have terrible recollections of that period. We had to halt our postwar reconstruction. We had to rearm. We sent goods to North Korea without getting paid. With all this came police terror. Stalinism is dead, but what will happen if the Vietnam war spreads"?

The Poles feel that American bombing of Hanoi at the end of last year, one or two days before a scheduled meeting between the American ambassador in Warsaw and the North Vietnamese ambassador, caused the North Vietnamese to believe that this was an American move to sabotage the talks, and so they canceled the meeting. Since then the Poles have not been willing to act as go-betweens. But their rulers show their anger against Washington at every chance. The last Polish ambassador there died six months ago. Washington is, after Moscow, the most important diplomatic post for Poland. But Gomulka refuses to fill it. He doesn't want a new Polish ambassador going to the White House to shake hands with Lyndon Johnson, and making the traditional little speech about American-Polish friendship just now.

Everywhere there is concern about American objectives: in Western Europe as well as in the European communist camp. This is often described as a fear that the US has got disinterested in the fate of Europe, and is concentrated almost exclusively on Southeast Asia. According to what I heard during my visit to half a dozen European countries, the essence of the criticism of Washington's current line is quite different. The Europeans do not mind that the Americans are less involved in their affairs. To some extent, they welcome it. They consider that the time when American embassies were deeply involved in local politics and in each of those countries' foreign, military and economic policies, has passed. Even the West Germans prefer withdrawal of a few thousand American troops to the obligation to purchase American arms they don't need. What frightens the Europeans – French, Germans, Italians, Poles, Hungarians, Rumanians – is what they call "American irresponsibility." They say they recognize that the US is the mightiest country in the world. If the US gets in deep trouble, everyone is in trouble, whether they support the Americans or denounce them makes no difference. Fear of what the US will do in coming months in Vietnam, fear of what is viewed as the unavoidable impact of the 1968 American presidential elections on Johnson's military strategy, is probably the strongest common feeling on both sides of the European Iron Curtain.

This is well understood by many of the communist leaders of Eastern Europe. Though their public pronouncements are extremely harsh on Washington, in private they are much less anti-American. They would if they could help the US out of the mess. Unfortunately they don't know how. This includes Tito.

East European grievances against the US are not limited to Vietnam. Washington's professed aim of "building bridges," the Johnson Administration's promises to extend the most-favored-nation trade clause to all the countries of Eastern Europe, Johnson's directive to the Export-Import Bank to finance deals with those countries, all sound to East Europeans like bad jokes. This is because the Rumanians, Czechs, Bulgarians, etc., one meets in a hotel lobby or in a Viennese restaurant are full of stories of bad experi-

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ences trying to arrange trade deals with American companies; the deals, they say, failed to materialize because government officials in Washington were more afraid of angering some right-wing Republican congressman opposing any trading with "the Reds," than they were anxious to implement the policy proclaimed by the President and his Secretary of State.

The communist countries of Eastern Europe need American machines, goods, equipment, but can buy them only if they get credits, and afterward are able to earn dollars by selling on the American market. The prospects for this are now very uncertain. For every deal between an American businessman and a communist trading organization, five or ten fall through.

In those circumstances relations with Western Europe look crucial to every country of Eastern Europe. Politically, economically, culturally, this is the only road that remains open to them. It's why Bucharest hastened to establish diplomatic relations with Bonn. The event shook the Soviet bloc like an earth tremor. The political seismographs are still trembling. "The Soviet bloc in fact doesn't exist any longer," a Polish diplomat told me. "We are trying now to save something from the ruins, by promoting close relations between Warsaw, East Berlin and Prague."

Diplomatic activity in recent months amounted to frantic efforts to isolate Rumania, and stop the spread of the disease called "relations with Bonn." It is symbolic of the evaporation of all ideologies that Bonn's initiative, so contrary to the Hallstein doctrine forbidding diplomatic relations with any country maintaining ties with East Berlin, instead of being feted as a big success for the communists was received with dismay and anger. And rightly so, because the Rumanians did not establish diplomatic relations with Bonn to please their allies, but to show their defiance of them.

The main role in the effort to build a *cordon sanitaire* around Rumania was given to the Poles. But only from the Czechs did the Poles get a strong anti-Bonn declaration, and public assurance of not establishing relations with Bonn unless Bonn recognizes East Germany. The Polish leaders traveled to Budapest and Sofia to renew friendship treaties. But from the Hungarians and the Bulgarians they got far less binding declarations in respect of future relations with Bonn. Both countries need to expand trade with West Germany. Even in respect of the Czechs, the leaders in Warsaw and in East Berlin are not sure their friendship will prove stronger than Bonn's wooing.

Among the ruling Polish bureaucracy, the Bonn-Bucharest agreement is seen as a tremendous defeat for Gomulka and the Soviet Union. The Polish communists, divided into many warring factions, unable to agree on almost anything, face growing economic difficulties with which they do not know how to cope. Disintegration of the Soviet camp of Eastern Europe, accompanied by evaporation of both Soviet and American prestige, is causing a great vacuum in one of the most sensitive areas of the world. Who will fill it? De Gaulle's France? The general is scheduled to visit Warsaw in June, and Bucharest probably later this year. But in France domestic problems are at the top of the agenda. As in many other countries, so in France people have discovered that in the two postwar decades they placed too great stress on foreign affairs and neglected domestic matters. They now want to make good this neglect. West Germany is not likely to embark once again on the path of *die grosse politik*. But if the vacuum in Eastern Europe really yawns, and the Rumanians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Czechs, perhaps even the Poles are rebuffed everywhere else, what then?

PHILIP BEN

Crime and Punishment In "The Club"

The Member was discovered snitching silverware and towels, but the Club didn't eject him the way that noisy club down the street had done to one of *their* members not long ago. ("Those chaps just don't have the savvy, probably because they've got such a rapid turnover in membership. Let one of their members get in trouble and they panic. They should follow our motto: 'Play it *down*, not *up*'.")

The whole unpleasant matter had been turned over to the Committee on Good Form and Good Conduct. Four-and-one-half years later the Committee issued a report in which it recommended that the Member be censured. Three years of this time were spent over a question that muddled them all: Which was the least severe, "censure" or "condemnation"? ("We are very precise in our use of words in this Club, you know, no matter what those bleeding-heart intellectuals at the University Club say.")

The Committee found the Member guilty as charged. ("After all, when four employees say they saw the Member put the silverware and towels into his luggage, and when 15 members saw the stuff fall out as he was getting into the cab – well, you can't ignore evidence like that, can you?")

The Committee decided not to investigate employees' reports that the Member's trunk was bulging with candelabra and gold-plated lighters from the city room; combs, soap and hair tonic from the men's room, and golf balls from the locker room. ("Why tarnish the Club's good reputation further by going into all *that*?")

There had also been reliable reports that he had – for monetary gain – abused his position as chairman of

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the golf committee, vice chairman of the men's room committee, and as a member of several other committees; that he had borrowed $500,000 from the employees; that he had been paid large sums to write letters of recommendation on Club stationery; and that he had been given a roomful of Scotch from the company that had been given the Club's bar concession (it was remembered that he had interceded vigorously on their behalf.) But the Good Form and Good Conduct Committee decided not to look into these charges, either, for the same sensible reason it had decided not to look into the candelabra, combs, etc. ("What's more, we felt that the *principle* of the thing had been established. There was nothing to be gained by putting the fellow through the wringer on a lot of other sordid business.")

The employees had already been fired by the Member himself, so they weren't a problem, but the Committee – to make sure it was dispensing impartial justice all around – denounced these former staff members, and suggested that the police investigate them. ("Yes, it's true that we wouldn't have known about the thefts in the first place without the employees' reports, and it's true that there's a sign telling them to report thefts, but it seems clear that we never meant thefts by *members!*")

The Member was censured by a majority vote of the membership – a move that was carried off without too much fuss due to the Committee's wise handling of the matter. There were some objections because the Member was allowed to keep the silverware and towels, and because he was allowed to stay on as chairman, vice chairman, and member of all those committees, but most people disagreed with such protests. ("In all fairness, how can a chap be deprived of his privileges and prerogatives and responsibilities in areas where he hasn't even been investigated?")

Before the vote, there had been much discussion of the Member. It was agreed that he had never been very popular. As a matter of fact, no one could even recall having had him over for dinner. ("Never did take to the fellow. Doesn't have the *quality* the rest of us have got.")

Also before the vote, the leader of the majority elements of the Club came to the Member's defense, although a few reformers in the majority group grumbled that on questions of public morality Majority Leader Short wasn't perhaps the best spokesman available. Short's main point seemed to be that other members were also dishonest – he mentioned a startling 50 percent as a possibility – and that therefore the Member shouldn't be punished just because *he* got caught. Many found Short's reasoning both obscure and unattractive. ("Doesn't Short realize he'll make us *all* look like crooks? After all, we made him leader for *practical* reasons, not for him to make decisions on morality.")

The Member himself said that he wasn't guilty, and that his conscience was untroubled. As a matter of fact, he said, he was indignant. He pointed out – devastatingly, he thought – that there wasn't anything in the Rules of Conduct against taking silverware and towels. As far as those other charges were concerned, he said, he was sure that if he had done anything wrong the Good Form and Good Conduct Committee would have investigated. ("He's got something there, you know. I hadn't thought about the Rules. It really *is* time we did something about them. Revising the Rules has been on the agenda for 178 years now." "Isn't that how old the Club is?" "By Jove, I think you're right!")

One officer of the Club was willing "to go out on a limb – but not for attribution; this is a very delicate subject" – and to predict that the Rule would be radically revised to prohibit "the removal by a Member, for his permanent and personal use, of any object from the premises of the Club." No one would predict that such a stern regulation would go through without heavy debate, and, perhaps, significant modifications. ("We don't like to tinker with a system that has worked so well for so long. That's why we're the most admired Club in town.")

Asked whether changes would also be made to prevent the other kinds of irregularities – those the Committee had decided not to investigate – the leader of the Minority Group, Patrick Henry McKinley, said, in several indignant speeches, "I do not want this Club singled out as the only one suspected of unethical conduct," and "we don't want to vote anything that would amount to a confession that there is something dishonest here. I'm not going to police another member of this body," and "there is a sinister effort to make us into second-class citizens."

This reasoning hit the bull's eye for many Club members, especially committee chairmen. ("After all, we *did* chastise the Member – and officially, too. How much do those bloody reformers want? If they got their way, there'd be no advantages in belonging to the Club. If we can't do a little business on the side, we might just as well stay at the YMCA.")

The Chowder and Champagne Dinner for the benefit of retired members of the Retirement Fund Committee was held a few days after the censure vote. All agreed it was a great success. A short meeting of the Good Form and Good Conduct Committee was held after the dinner. It was decided to push through the "Removal for Permanent and Personal Use" Bill, but to postpone action on other proposals until after the Club's 200th anniversary, which was only 22 years away. ("Don't want to spoil an event of such historic significance with a debate on ethics and stuff of that sort. It wouldn't be seemly.") ROBERT YOAKUM

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Who Needs People?

Not the Strippers of Appalachia

by James Ridgeway

Whitesburg, Kentucky

While the federal poverty programs have made life a bit easier, there are few signs of any real economic development that would put the depressed hill country of eastern Kentucky on its feet. The Appalachian Regional Development Act, passed in March 1965, is meant to revive the area, but after two years nothing much has been done in eastern Kentucky, and plans for the future seem far off and vague.

If things go on as they are, the future of the Kentucky hills will not be determined by the people who live there, or by the courthouse politicians, or even, for that matter, by the planner-technocrats in Washington. More probably life will continue to be dictated by the large absentee landowning companies which hold the mineral rights to the land. These include industrial giants like US Steel and Bethlehem Steel, which use Kentucky coal for making steel, as well as several other lesser known firms that make a killing in coal speculation. The landholders lease the mineral rights to coal operators, and in return get 25 or 35 cents for each ton of coal which is extracted and a comparable rate for natural gas.

The landholders pay little for exploiting the land and people. To accommodate their continued operation, the counties charge only token property taxes. For example, Bethlehem Steel not long ago paid $12 million to Consolidation Coal for coal lands which had been appraised by the county tax assessor at a so-called "fair market value" of $900,000.

But the real money in coal is possible because of the loopholes in the federal income tax regulations. The landowning companies can first take out a cost depletion allowance, and then pay an income tax at the 25 percent capital gains rate. (Usually corporations pay a 50 percent tax on income.) One of the big firms in the business is Virginia Coal & Iron Company of Philadelphia. It leases out 100,000 acres of land in Kentucky and southwestern Virginia and has interests in a coal company that mines some of that land. Virginia Coal & Iron is said to be the most profitable company in America. In 1965 it had total revenues of $2.9 million and a net income of $1.9 million, or 65 percent of the total revenue. By contrast General Motors, the world's biggest firm, had a 9.5 percent margin on revenues.

There is growing demand for coal to make electricity, and this, in turn, has led to a marked increase in strip mining. Strip-mined coal is perhaps 50 percent cheaper to produce than coal taken from a deep mine. One of the main customers in eastern Kentucky is the Tennessee Valley Authority. It buys strip-mined coal in order to charge less for electricity than the private power companies.

Strip mining results directly in ruining the land. The operator comes in and gouges a cut into the side of the mountain, then drills out the coal with an augur and throws the spoil down the side of the hill where it lies in a huge apron. When it rains, the sulphur runs off the spoil and into the creeks, polluting them. The loose dirt shifts and is likely to pour in an avalanche down into the hollow.

Despite the modest restrictions Kentucky has placed on strip miners, they still seem to do pretty much as they please. They are required to compensate the home owner, or the holder of surface rights, as he is called, for property losses due to mining, but the burden of bringing the complaint is on the householder. He is up against political and economic forces which are more interested in extracting coal than in protecting the little cabins in the hollows. The cabin isn't likely to be worth more than a few hundred dollars anyhow. But its demolition is far more important, for it ends a way of life. Thus, in a crude way strip mining accomplishes what the planners in Washington have long sought. Their desire is to get the people out of the hollows and into some more convenient place where they can be doused with social services and hustled along into some other industrial activity.

The people retreat, grudgingly, offering here and there a kind of guerrilla resistance. In the fall of 1965, for example, Mrs. Ollie Combs, a 61-year-old widow, got her two boys and they all lay down in front of a bulldozer that was about to start stripping near her place in Knott County. The state police hauled them off to jail, where the Combs spent Thanksgiving. This

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led to introduction of a bill in the state legislature which would have required coal operators to get permission from the surface rights holders before starting work. It was beaten, and instead the state adopted in 1966 a measure, then regarded as a model for the nation, that placed restrictions on the height of the cut in the hill and required strippers to fix up the mess afterward. But it carried no criminal penalties, and the idea of putting a mountain back together again is farcical. From all accounts, strip mining goes on unabated.

Last fall the Southern Conference Educational Fund Inc. (SCEF) sought to organize people in a grass-roots movement against strip mining. It put out a notice, from Hemphill in eastern Kentucky, warning that the Greer-Ellison Coal Company of Virginia was about to start strip mining around Hemphill, thereby endangering the water supply and ruining the land. SCEF reported that people in Hemphill were stirred up, and quoted one woman who said, "We ought to just do like these old women did over yonder in Knott County. We ought to get our guns and go over there and tell 'em to git. I can shoot a .38. We'll go up and they'll come off in a hurry."

This was spirited talk, and B. L. Greer, president of Greer-Ellison, took out a two-page ad in the *Community Press*, the local paper, to set things straight. He said the company wouldn't ruin the water supply or the land; then quoting from a House Un-American Activities Committee report, he suggested SCEF was a communist front, up to no good. Greer appealed to the patriotism of the local citizenry. "Our boys are dying by the thousands in the jungles of Vietnam, fighting a beastly communistic foe. Whether you like it or not, these boys must be supported by you parents, relatives and citizens. If there be people in your county preaching revolution, regardless of whether or not the subject has popular appeal, *turn your backs on these individuals or groups because their aim is to destroy your way of life.*" Within a month the SCEF representative was out of the county and the mining was under way.

The Appalachian Volunteers

Recently the Appalachian Volunteers, a group of community organizers funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity, have been trying to help people along Jones Creek, outside Harlan in Harlan County, to organize against strip miners. I took a look at this place. At the bottom of the creek you could look up on a mountain and see the strip, gouged around the side. It looked rather like a highway cut. On moving a few miles up the creek, and into the hollow, the stream bed was covered with a thick layer of mud. Near the head of the hollow, the front end of the dirt avalanche came into view. This was a huge pile of debris; large rocks and whole trees that had been uprooted in the slide which had come tumbling down one day with a thunderous roar. One house had been smashed to pieces and buried. The avalanche stopped short of another cabin which had been abandoned. Down the creek a bit, a woman in a third house eyed the pile warily. Her family had decided to hold out for a while. The Appalachian Volunteers were taking people to Frankfort to talk with state officials about the damage, and they had been assured everything would be fixed up, a promise that was taken with a grain of salt.

The government programs aimed at reviving this depressed region have made some small impress, but do not appear to have caused any real change for the better. A four-county poverty program that has its headquarters in Whitesburg is credited with keeping people from starving and providing useful medical and educational services. It now is attempting to draw up a plan for low-cost housing. The poor people appear to have some say in its direction and the courthouse politicians apparently let it alone so long as it offers no real threat to them. I did not find any signs of poor people in open revolt against the powers that be, as I had expected from reading reports in *The New York Times*. Cliston Johnson, the head of a group of jobless fathers called the United Poor People of Eastern Kentucky, has met with rough going in trying to organize 4,000 men to fight a poverty program cutback. He hasn't been able to get more than 70 men out to a meeting, and when I talked with him, Johnson seemed dubious about pushing on with the effort. "They give just enough to keep them from squealing," he said of the poverty program. And even the Appalachian Volunteers, who are keen on grass-roots organizing, thought it would be a long haul. There isn't any sort of organizational base on which to build in eastern Kentucky; the people are spread out, and the economic forces which dictate life there seem remote and abstract. Tom Gish, editor of the *Mountain Eagle*, the Whitesburg weekly newspaper, said he couldn't detect much improvement. While the poverty program helped starving unemployed miners, Gish thought it ironically also had worked to dampen any possibility of organizing them into a political pressure group. As for economic development of the area, Gish said he had attended planning meetings for 10 years, and nothing had happened.

The Appalachian Act is meant to implement a long-term economic development program. It calls for spending $1.1 billion over six years. Most of the money, $840-million, will go for construction of 3,300 miles of roads that are supposed to connect the shut-off areas of Appalachia to the outside world, and thereby hasten its industrial development. Where possible the commission has ruled that local labor is to be used in building roads, and Willard Wirtz, the Secretary of Labor, en-

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thusiastically claims that road construction will create 30,000 man-years of employment.

Actually this is a slow-moving operation. To date, 285 miles of roads are under construction, and the work has created about 1,500 jobs in five states where the work is concentrated. In Kentucky, 42.8 miles of roads are under construction and 12.6 miles opened for traffic. According to the commission, about 500 people are employed building roads in the state. At this rate, it will be some 20 years before the 3,300 miles of roadway are built, and since a good portion of this is to be two-lane road and not four-lane, there is some question as to whether it won't be out of date by then.

The Appalachian Act also provides relatively small amounts of money for vocational schools, libraries, hospitals, airports and sewage treatment plants. There are no requirements for using local labor in these projects. In Kentucky the idea is to develop clusters of towns that can become regional centers. Most of the development money has been used to build vocational schools. Since there isn't any industry aside from coal mining in the area, the graduates may well want to depart to find work elsewhere. And this will only result in making the problems of eastern Kentucky more acute. The place already looks like an Indian reservation, full of old people and children, drained of active young adults.

A Depopulation Program

From what I could find out, Harry Caudill, the author of *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, was right when he said recently, "The scheme the federal authorities have devised for our highlands is not a development program at all. It is a depopulation program. Some 80 percent of the money Congress has authorized will go into roads, and these roads will lead to a few strategically located 'growth centers', many of them completely outside the hills. These highways will act as efficient conveyors to move people out of the hinterlands into a few places like Lexington, Kentucky, and Kingsport, Tennessee. There, the theory runs, they will find jobs and happiness.

"I have a very deeply rooted suspicion that this undertaking reflects a bold plan fostered by the great absentee holding corporations to empty the countryside in order to facilitate their extractive industries. Nothing could suit them better than to empty the long valleys of the Appalachian hinterlands, to leave the little houses vacant, without inhabitants to witness or protest destruction of the land. Then our latter-day colonialists could drill and dig and gouge and cut and blast to their heart's content. Then, without interference from troublesome local people, they could get out the minerals by the cheapest, the most technologically efficient method. Their profits would swell accordingly and their dividend rates would soar to new levels. Then in God's good time, the strip-mined landscape and its hideous streams would be sold to the federal government for rehabilitation at the cost of the taxpayer."

Caudill is chairman of a new group called the Congress for Appalachian Development. It is interested in creating public authorities to develop the region in imitation of TVA's development of the Tennessee Valley. Initially the authorities could raise money by selling tax-exempt bonds, and with the proceeds get the land back from the absentee landowners. Then deep mines would be dug, and mine-mouth power plants built to send electricity to the expanding power markets of the northeast.

There are some drawbacks to this scheme. Big coal-burning power stations require a lot of water for cooling and there isn't enough in the streams in eastern Kentucky; they would have to be placed down the rivers, and probably out of the hills. For another, mine-mouth power plants wouldn't necessarily create a great many jobs. And as a practical political matter, there is little enthusiasm within Congress for public power schemes; the private power companies would be against the Caudill plan, as would the nuclear industry, and probably the Atomic Energy Commission.

A number of other steps could be taken to hasten change in eastern Kentucky. Congress surely ought to ban strip mining throughout the country, and short of that, instruct the TVA to stop buying strip-mined coal. It makes no sense to save a little on electricity rates only to pay out money later on to reclaim the land that was ruined to make the savings possible.

In addition, this depressed area needs enterprise other than mining. "The present generation of children was brought up with one thought in mind," Gish says, "and that was to get the hell out of the coal fields. The last thing a high school student around here wants is to go into mining." An alternative idea is to set up a university in the hills of eastern Kentucky. This would bring a middle class into the area, and quite probably would have an improving effect on the surrounding schools and hospitals. An immediate demand for goods and services would be created that in turn should lead to creating a variety of jobs for local people. There must be at least a million dollars already paid out by the government to professors and other professionals whose business it is to study eastern Kentucky. They might just as well live there and spend their salaries in the region. A university can be a fairly flexible and diverse enterprise, and thus might fit into eastern Kentucky without unduly disrupting the style of life there. But, of course, this proposition would require a commitment by the government to the idea of really developing the area, a commitment it has not made.

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How to Remove LBJ in 1968

by Doris Kearns & Sanford Levinson

The April peace march was a great success as a march – perhaps the largest single massing of citizens protesting a war policy in the entire history of the United States. But the longer the marchers sit around in coffee houses and tell each other how great it was, and debate how many were really there, the less likely is a viable political strategy to convert into a meaningful political voice the wide base of support for peace that was demonstrated at the march.

What's needed is hard thinking on how to organize a third party (or fourth, if George Wallace has priority) to compete for the presidency in 1968. Those who discourage any serious organizational groundwork this year, to "keep our options open," sound like Walt Rostow and do a serious disservice both to the peace and civil rights movements and to the American system of parliamentary democracy. It may be that LBJ will be able to get us out of Vietnam before '68, it may be that the Republicans will nominate a Hatfield – in either of which cases the two-party structure will be able to accommodate at least those whose sole dissatisfaction with contemporary America is our participation in an abominable war. It is likelier, however, that we shall all be faced with a flag-waving Johnson, and a mindless Romney or hawkish Nixon.

What is more important and becoming increasingly evident, as Richard Rovere recently pointed out, is that the relevant issue is not simply whether the Democratic or Republican Party is more likely to end the war, but whether the system of parliamentary democracy, as we know it, will continue. Even a Hatfield or a Percy, however dovish, is not equipped to handle the fact that there are large groups of people in this country who are not really represented in the party system as it now exists – the urban Negro, the marginal farmer or unskilled laborer, the emerging class of students who find The American Dream a nightmare leading to *1984*. Those likely to read this journal may well be able to "afford" the options of either supporting a Republican in 1968 or following the hippies out of the political system (there could be worse visions of life than utopian communities of love). But only the most quixotic can recommend these options to the first two groups named. Instead, the likelihood is that the consensus will further fragment and be replaced by mass disorder and violence. Even the students flushed by the "success" of the march know that it didn't mean a thing in terms of affecting policy, and even students enjoying the benefits of American life can be heard to mutter about the appeal of violence. . . . How much more so among those who enjoy none of the benefits?

Thus it is for profoundly conservative reasons that we hope for the formation of a third party. The two-party system is not functioning as in pluralist theory it should function – to make "working through the system" the preferable alternative to non-parliamentary means. It is enormously important to bring those who are now displaced into the political system, under the aegis of political institutions, instead of further validating the appeal of violence by prattling about the sacredness of the existing two-party system. It is a pathetic misunderstanding that makes the "Establishment" accuse those who suggest a third party of "refusing to work within the system." This is to confuse preservation of the existing party structure with preservation of parliamentary democracy. The former isn't worth much; the latter is worth everything.

To make the effort worthwhile, it need not be posited that a third-party candidate would win, or even come close. Traditionally, the functions of third parties have not been to win elections, but to demonstrate the existence of a block of voters for whose support a major party must bid; to force major parties to alter stands on certain issues, and to serve as bridges for movement of the discontented from one party to another, or back to the original party after stands are altered. A third-party effort in 1968 could help do this in several ways.

The left is strategically located in the states with the largest electoral vote – New York, California, Michigan and Illinois. Should the displacement of the normal Democratic vote to a third-party candidate make it possible for an acceptable Republican to carry those states and thus win the presidency, the first objective is achieved – the removal of Johnson, Rusk and Rostow from power in the American government. (Let us admit that our premise is that the Republican Party, scenting victory, will avoid their urge to nominate Nixon or Reagan.)

Perhaps even more important would be the impetus

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to meaningful political organization of the now unrepresented. If it is true that this can be accomplished only by long, hard activity on the local level, it is also true that the intrinsic drama and importance of a challenge on the presidential level could help boost such local organizing. Contacts can be made and relationships formed which would encourage a much greater sense of unity than the fragmentation and frustration that now characterize the left.

The frustration that exists among the populace at large may encourage discussion of fundamentals that the United States has ignored for two decades. If the left chooses, instead, simply to support a Republican, and should he win and end the war, the most likely outcome would be in his automatic reelection in 1972, *à la* Eisenhower, in a mood of national complacency and apathy, and concomitant policies of mediocre irrelevance characteristic of Republicanism. To wait until 1972 to organize might be fatal to the hopes of the dispossessed – and to the stability of the United States.

"Whistling in a Very Lively Graveyard"

New York

Conrad Lynn has neither the presence of Malcolm X nor the desperate volubility of Jesse Gray, but he does have the jugular directness of both: "I am for the destruction of this imperialistic state by revolution. And not in pacifist terms either." Lynn is an old-time radical lawyer who represented a hero of the ghetto, Robert Williams (now in Peking). Lynn was also the lawyer for Bill Epton, is one of the lawyers for the Harlem Six, and represented David Mitchell and other white and black young men who are challenging the draft. Lynn expects an *armed* revolution from the ghettos of the large American cities. It will not come from the ghetto criminal groups because they are largely under police control. "The major political parties are whistling in a very lively graveyard. They are in a dream world when it comes to the black ghetto because the fury of the black people is *unbelievable*."

Lynn is a friendly, unassuming man with frequent bursts of ironic good humor that has a way of hitting home no matter how outrageous his opening statement might seem to be. "It may be hard for whites to understand, but ghetto violence has not been fully directed against them yet. Most of the violence has remained in the ghetto and is directed against the people living there. The self-hate is *incredible*. Men who know they will never make it. I'm talking about men with college degrees who are not the token Negroes. When I have a marital case. A man and woman from the ghetto who want a divorce. Before I can get that couple into court, the man has beaten her to death. Ghetto violence is an extension of this self-hatred. Watts, Nashville, Harlem, they're the slow beginning of the ghetto finally turning its violence outside the ghetto to the whites.

"They're not communists," he grins. "A few college students may be Marxists, but they're the ones who are *not* anti-white. They want to *change* the existing economic order that is strangling them. The Moynihan plan? Ha, ha." His eyes light up sardonically. "Take the militant black youth out of the ghetto and educate him in the armed forces? Then ship him overseas to fight for the same system that has ruined his father, brother, sister. The degrading insult from the white establishment is always there. No, no, no, the black man is not that dumb."

Lynn was drummed out of the Communist Party in 1937. "I was expelled," he says with obvious enjoyment, "because I was to the left of the communists." Notwithstanding his self-appointed place on the political spectrum, he is neither anti-white nor anti-Semitic. "How can you blame it on Jewish storekeepers and landlords, and all that? It could just as easily be Poles or Germans doing the same thing in this system." No one could call him a black chauvinist. "The most corrupt press is the Negro press. When a black soldier comes home from basic training – and though he hasn't been to war – they put his picture on the society page. If you want to read about the civil rights struggle, the white press – however corrupt itself – carries incomparably more news on this subject."

The new forms that black unrest may take may sound incredible as Lynn relates them, but, along the way from Brooklyn Heights to neighboring Cobble Hill to a midnight subway ride to Harlem, we kept meeting black and white people who confirmed Lynn's views. "It's not only the cities that are going to know violence, but the suburbs, too," is one of Lynn's contentions. Four hours after he made this remark, an earnest Negro told about his daughter who attends Francis Lewis High School in white, middle-class Queens. She and her friends no longer salute the American flag. "We don't believe in the war. The things the US says it's fighting for just can't be true." There are many black people, according to Lynn, who are opposed to the Vietnam war, but they also hate *all* whites with a bitterness that prevents them from marching in peace demonstrations.

One of the strangest cases Lynn has handled is that of Ed Oquendo, a Yoruba who was indicted for refusal to obey a draft notice a year ago. Yoruba is a name taken from a West African tribe by a group of black men who wear the African dress of this tribe. They carry no weapons but their presence can create an atmosphere of violence. Every time Ed Oquendo comes

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to the federal court in Brooklyn, Eastern District, his group comes with him and the case is adjourned to a future date. It has been called off several times and now the case has been adjourned for an indefinite period, according to Lynn.

The government's manpower training program for the ghetto was an excellent idea except for its blind end which led to the unrest it sought to avert. Lynn observed, "A kid goes through the program and still has no job. At that point he begins to learn about the society he's living in. If a youngster decides he doesn't want to get in the draft, he is sent to members of Afro-Americans for Survival. He is not only informed about the draft, he is given an indoctrination on the workings of his society."

A twinkle comes to Lynn's eyes when he talks of the Cleveland police official who warns Negroes he is violent. "In the Harlem riot of '64," Lynn recalls, "the special tactical police force swept through the streets shooting up the place without meeting any resistance. Next time, the people must be ready in basements to fire back and defend themselves. What the ghetto has learned is that a policeman doesn't want to die. He doesn't want to lose his life just because of a job. It will be a *tremendous* morale builder for the dark ghetto for men to shoot back at the police once they've been attacked. I'm all for it. What I'm against is undirected violence."

Lynn shares a conviction with the late Malcolm X and Jesse Gray that there are forces within the ghetto that make him seem a man of peace.

Morris Renek

Ky *v* Buddhists—Round 2

by Tran Van Dinh

A call for cease-fire and peace on the 2,511th anniversary of Buddha's birthday on May 23 was made by the United Buddhist Church of Vietnam, after a meeting of the steering committee of the Vien Hoa Dao (Secular Institute of the United Buddhist Church) at the An Quang pagoda in Saigon on February 28. The committee asked Venerable Thich Tinh Khiet, Supreme Patriarch of the Buddhist Church, to appeal to all Buddhists in North and South Vietnam, all belligerents, all Buddhist countries, and to the United Nations, to observe or support a cease-fire and a week of prayer for peace. In Vietnam, the week of May 16-23 will be devoted to mass meetings for prayer; at Da Nang, the city in the northern area of South Vietnam, the prayer campaign will start three days earlier, on May 13, to honor some 500 persons killed and wounded during General Nguyen Cao Ky's suppression of the Buddhist struggle movement in that area exactly a year ago. The Saigon military junta treated the Buddhist call with cool indifference at first. Only on April 8, after consultations with the US, did Ky agree to a one-day cease-fire. Buddhism being the religion of the majority in Vietnam, Saigon would be wise to make the truce for at least two days, as at Christmas, a Christian holiday. On April 18, during a visit to India, UN Secretary General U Thant, who is a Buddhist, urged that "a cease-fire proposed for May 23 be extended indefinitely." On April 27, the National Liberation Front (NLF, Viet Cong) announced that its forces would "observe a 48-hour cease-fire," thus scoring a psychological victory over Saigon.

The United Buddhist Church's call for a cease-fire and peace comes less than a year after the Buddhist movement in South Vietnam was all but annihilated. Last May, Ky arrested 4,000 or 5,000 people. Most were jailed without being charged with anything. Ky also disarmed his most dangerous rivals, four generals of Central Vietnamese origin, including the commander of the First Army Corps, General Nguyen Chanh Thi. The First Army Corps (also called I Corps) controls the five northern provinces of South Vietnam and the cities of Hue and Da Nang, strongholds of the Buddhist movement. In September, General Thi was sent for three months to Washington, ostensibly to get treatment for sinus which doctors at Walter Reed Hospital later said he never had. Still holding a diplomatic passport and a Pan-Am return ticket, Thi is still wait-

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Tran Van Dinh *was Chargé d'Affaires and Acting Ambassador of Vietnam to the US in 1964. After representing his country in several Asian countries and in Latin America, he resigned from the Vietnamese foreign service to live and work in Washington as a journalist, author and lecturer. Born in the Imperial City of Hue in 1923 he fought against the Japanese and the French (1942-49) in the nationalist cause.*

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ing for Saigon's permission to go home. His situation is ironical, especially since April 19, when Ky announced that *Viet Cong* returnees will be given good jobs and good treatment.

Despite a climate of terror following last May's repressions, the Buddhists and students whom Saigon had accused of being pro-communist did not join the Viet Cong. After a summer of repression and a winter of frustration came Tet, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year (February 8). During Tet, all newspapers in South Vietnam publish a special spring issue. Possibly the censors had no time to read them all. The papers had peace as their dominant theme. This was reflected in the CBS polls (March 21), according to which 81 percent of people interviewed in areas controlled by the Saigon government want peace above all, though it is known that in those areas, talk about peace is tantamount to treason. But peace has been the consistent platform of the Buddhist Church, a platform shared by other faiths including the "moderate Catholics," who follow the directives of the Pope and of Archbishop Nguyen Van Binh of the Saigon diocese. On February 2, the Catholic weekly *Song Dao* said in an editorial: "The Pope says: In the name of the Lord, we cry, Stop, one has to get together, one has to meet and negotiate in all sincerity; and the conference of Vietnamese bishops solemnly repeated these words from the Holy Father." The same day, in Paris, the Vietnamese Overseas Buddhist Association circulated to all Vietnamese living abroad a letter which proposed direct negotiations among the Vietnamese, the representatives of all religions on one side and the National Liberation Front and Hanoi on the other.

War with China

On February 20, in Saigon, 70 student leaders and professors from the five universities of South Vietnam defiantly addressed a letter to US students asking them to consider that: "In South Vietnam cities, American power has become so great in support of the Ky government that no one can speak against the war without risking his life or his liberty. If it were not so, millions would speak out. The people of South Vietnam desperately want the war to end, but they are losing hope. They are not communist, but if the war does not end soon, they will join the National Liberation Front because they see no other way out.

"Americans should not believe they are protecting the South Vietnamese against communism. Most of us believe that the US only wants to control our country in order to prepare for war with China.

"The present government of South Vietnam is not our government and is not representing our people. It was imposed on us by the US and is controlled by military men who fought for the French against the Vietnamese before 1954. If we were free to vote freely, that government would not last one day. We want a government of our own, not controlled by either side, so that we may be able to settle the problems of Vietnam by ourselves on the basis of national brotherhood, to negotiate peace with the National Liberation Front and North Vietnam, and negotiate with the US for withdrawal of American troops.

"Do not believe the danger of a communist takeover justifies continuation of the war. We think we are strong enough to form an independent government. The decision, however, should be ours and not yours, when it is our lives and our country that are being destroyed.

"We endorse the proposals outlined in the book written by our friend, Thich Nhat Hanh, *Vietnam: Lotus in a Sea of Fire*, and ask your help to realize them."

Since February 20, hundreds more have joined the original 70, and several student leaders and professors have been arrested.

The book mentioned by the Vietnamese students and professors appeared in South Vietnam in January. The English version was published almost at the same time in the US, by the firm of Hill and Wang. The author is a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, formerly director of the School for Social Services of the Van Hanh Buddhist University in Saigon. Before that, he studied at Columbia University. A poet and scholar in the tradition of the Vietnamese Buddhist clergy, he made a lecture tour in the US and Europe last summer. Because of his campaign for peace and his criticism of the Saigon military junta, he is now prevented from returning to Vietnam, and lives temporarily in Paris. His book caught the attention of intellectuals. In the first month, 15,000 copies were sold, and the book is now in its fifth print and its 70,000th copy. This is unprecedented in the publishing history of Vietnam. The Saigon government's reaction was strong and immediate. The government radio attacked the book. Vietnamese newspapers which reviewed the book were censored and threatened with closure. In an article in the *Washington Star* of April 16, Richard Critchfield referred to this book in this anecdote: "One woman professor from Saigon was recently apprehended with a suitcase full of copies of a subversive pamphlet."

From Ky's point of view, the book is, indeed, subversive. Ky said in a speech to his officers that if a civilian government came to office, the communists would take over in 24 hours. Thich Nhat Hanh proposes creation of a temporary government built principally around the existing religious groups; a complete cease-fire; negotiations for withdrawal of US forces and with the National Liberation Front and North Viet-

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nam for peace; a coalition South Vietnamese government; and normalization of relations with North Vietnam looking toward eventual unification. Arthur Miller calls the book "a political and moral key to a viable and independent Vietnam."

"Our People Are Destroyed"

On February 18, two leading Buddhist monks, Thich Tri Quang and Thich Quang Do, sent an open letter to the American people in which they said: "The longer the war goes on, the stronger communism becomes; Americans become colonialists, and our people are destroyed." On March 29, Thich Tri Quang addressed a similar letter to the religious leaders in the US. He said in part: "The situation in Vietnam, which the US authorities report to the American public as favorable, is in fact a tragic carnage of the Vietnamese people, and the present situation in South Vietnam has deteriorated to a point where it is comparable with, if not worse than, a communist domination."

Ky's strategy for dealing with the Buddhist campaign for peace is to accommodate the "moderate" leader, Thich Tam Chau, whose following is shrinking, while cracking down on the "militants." On February 24, Hue radio announced the arrest of three Buddhist monks. A Buddhist lay leader was arrested as a "draft dodger" – Professor Tran Quang Thuan, a former minister of social welfare and an important figure in the Buddhist struggle movement of last May, since when he had been in hiding. During the last week of February and the first week of March, several government-sponsored "spontaneous demonstrations" took place in Saigon. The government's intention was to make the peace movement look as if it were foreign inspired or foreign controlled. Demonstrators recruited among the "militant Catholics" (anti-Vatican Catholics), and the "youth groups," burned effigies of General de Gaulle, Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, several members of the shadow government in exile in Paris supposedly headed by Professor Buu Hoi, and Senators Fulbright and Robert Kennedy. These demonstrations became a farce. In a March 8 editorial, the *Saigon Post* wrote: "All this should be brought to an end. School boys and girls should go to school, whatever the political situation may be in the land. Otherwise the emotions released by their participation in mass demonstrations may be used by Machiavellian politicians for unavowed purposes." The "Machiavellian politicians" are the generals, and in particular General Nguyen Van Thieu, the head of state, and Ky.

Ky was afraid that Thieu, a Catholic, might use the demonstrations against him. Since the election of the Constituent Assembly in September, intense in-fighting has gone on between Thieu and Ky, who both want to be president of South Vietnam. First, Thieu let Ky attack the members of the Constituent Assembly (*NR*, January 21). They are known as "the 117 minus one." Tran Van Van, who openly challenged the military and advocated negotiations with the NLF, was shot to death last December. Members of the Assembly, although elected under undemocratic procedures and composed of landowners and urban intellectuals, nevertheless have in common a belief in the need to create a civilian government to negotiate peace. The death of Tran Van Van has been followed by attempts on the lives of other members. The latest is Nguyen Van Tinh, who received on April 4 a "gift" of hand grenades and threatening letters. Earlier, when another politician, Nguyen Ngoc An, was shot and wounded near Tay Ninh city on March 27, "political figures in Saigon immediately linked the assault with the assassination late last year of Tran Van Van and the attempted assassination of Dr. Phan Quang Dan, both influential members of the Constituent Assembly," to quote Ward Just in *The Washington Post* of March 30. This climate of threats explained why the chairman of the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Phan Khac Suu, attempted to close off debate on the problem of peace in the Assembly on March 2.

At the end of March, when Ky came back from the Guam meeting with President Johnson, during which he completely stole the limelight from Thieu, he maneuvered to get himself nominated as the military candidate in the presidential elections to be held on September 1. But in several meetings of the National Leadership Committee (the military junta), Ky was constantly outvoted by Thieu. Ky then turned to the polls. In an editorial on April 7, the *Saigon Post* revealed: "According to a well-informed source, Thieu and Ky have agreed to a formula according to which polls in the various provinces of Vietnam will assess their respective chance of election in the coming test. Our informant says they have both agreed to accept the findings of this survey." Then, Thieu entered a hospital for an appendicitis operation. When he emerged, he learned that the polls, organized by Ky with the expert advice of Dr. Nguyen Huu Chi (PhD, Michigan State University) showed that Ky is "the favorite of the people as a military candidate." Nguyen Huu Chi, former provincial governor, was named Ky's special assistant on public relations.

Ever since the beginning of this year, Ky has tried discreetly to purge the army of Thieu followers. In February, Ky set up a committee to "clean the army of corruption." Among others, Colonel Nguyen Van Quang, commandant of the Quang Trung Military School on the outskirts of Saigon and an important supporter of Thieu, was suspended. In this game, Thieu is not in a good position. The police (both civilian

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and military) are commanded by Ky's closest associate, a northern general, Nguyen Ngoc Loan. Ky also has the support of General Cao Van Vien, the chief of staff and minister of defense.

Thieu leaked to the press that he intended to invite General Duong Van Minh (Big Minh) to return from his exile in Thailand to run as a military candidate. General Big Minh, a southerner, is popular with the army and with the Buddhists. Once, in 1965, he tried to return to Saigon, but his plane was not allowed to land at Tan Son Nhut airport. Thieu is not to be underestimated. He does not speak much, but he is a master of intrigue. The struggle between Ky and Thieu will continue until May 15, when the Constituent Assembly finishes the draft of the presidential elections law, and when the candidates for the presidential race will declare themselves. After May 15, if Ky is the candidate, Thieu is unlikely to call off the struggle.

Demoralized Soldiers

The struggle between Thieu and Ky has contributed to demoralization of the South Vietnamese army. The effect is most visible in I Corps. The population in this area has been unfriendly to Saigon since the repression of the Buddhists last May. I Corps has military and administrative jurisdiction over five northern provinces, including Thua Thien (Hue) and Quang Tri, south of the six-mile-wide DMZ (demilitarized zone) at the 17th parallel. My own information confirms what Richard Critchfield of the *Washington Star* wrote on April 20 about the deterioration of the situation in that area: "Since February, the Viet Cong have shot rockets at Da Nang air base, mortared three provincial capitals, attacked 40 revolutionary development teams wiping out one, attacked 10 district towns overrunning four, blown up four strategic bridges, mined dozens of civilian buses and military vehicles, cut road links, tried to terrorize the ancient imperial city of Hue, and successfully penetrated Quang Tri city and two regimental headquarters. In almost all of these actions, there was some evidence of a fifth column at work." The fifth columnists are the indifferent, antagonistic people and the demoralized soldiers. Mr. Critchfield further recognized that "centering in Hue, still intact, are the struggle organizations built by Thich Tri Quang among the professors and the students of Hue University and the Central Vietnam clergy and laymen in mid-1963." Yet, only a few months ago, the US press was almost unanimous in concluding the Buddhist movement was all but dead in Central Vietnam, and that Thich Tri Quang was a shadow of what he had been.

The resurgent power of Thich Tri Quang and the unfriendliness of the people in Central Vietnam toward the Saigon government are the results of suppressing the people's wish for peace. The former mayor of Da Nang, Dr. Man, whom Ky once threatened to shoot and who is now in jail, is not a Buddhist but a strong Catholic. The people of Central Vietnam are very stubborn. They cannot be subdued by force. Buddhism in Central Vietnam is deep-rooted in nationalism, and vice versa. Ho Chi Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap, Pham Van Dong, Ngo Dinh Diem came from Central Vietnam.

The gravity of the situation in I Corps is accentuated by the recent buildup of North Vietnamese forces at the demilitarized zone. There are now three or four 10,000-man North Vietnamese divisions at the border, besides some 21 Viet Cong battalions in the I Corps area. Facing these forces, the US has about 75,000 Marines, the offshore power of the 7th Fleet, undisputed superiority of air power and artillery. On April 22, the US command in Saigon announced the formation of a 15,000-man task force (nicknamed Oregon), composed of elements of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and of the First Air Cavalry. Soon, the US forces in I Corps area will amount to 100,000. The US forces are supported (or advised) by two divisions of the South Vietnamese First Army Corps under the command of Gen. Pham Xuan Nhuan. An honest general, Nhuan is, however, known for his weakness and his lack of leadership and decision.

The success or failure of the Buddhist call for a cease-fire and peace on May 23 depends on two developments:

First, the race for the presidency between Thieu and Ky. If Thieu is chosen as a military candidate (all the odds seem to be against him at this time) and because he is a Catholic, he would probably try to be on good terms with the Buddhists. If Ky is chosen, he will try to use the "moderate" Buddhists to crush the "militant" Buddhists in Central Vietnam, as he did last May. In doing so, he must have the necessary support from the US. In his statement on his arrival in Saigon on April 25, the new US ambassador, Ellsworth Bunker, said that "military power, important as it is, cannot alone give any lasting answer to the real problems of Vietnam. The larger task will take longer and will depend ultimately on the Vietnamese people themselves." Many Vietnamese would agree with him; most Vietnamese, and all the Buddhists, would prefer that no military man runs for office. If a general runs, with all the money and power in his command, with all the police apparatus at his disposal, and without freedom of the press, the elections in September will be a farce which will further complicate the situation. Legalization of military power through twisted ballots will only prolong the war.

Second, the military situation in I Corps. In congressional testimony on April 13, Admiral U.S.G. Sharp, commander-in-chief, US forces in the Pacific, stated:

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"It is likely the communists are avoiding major battles, using their sanctuaries, fighting defensively when forced to do so, and attempting to rebuild their forces for operations at an opportune time." Admiral Sharp may be right. But it is possible that the North Vietnamese buildup at the border is a diversionary tactic, to attract more US troops to the I Corps, creating a *de facto* occupation of the area. This will lead to more US control and therefore to more dissatisfaction among the people. General Vo Nguyen Giap, commander of the North Vietnamese Army, General Tran Nam Trung (alias Tran Van Tra) commander of the Viet Cong forces in South Vietnam, are political generals. Their interest is not in a military victory but in a political situation which could be exploited for politico-military purposes.

General Ky seems to look at the situation in I Corps differently. On April 15, on an inspection tour of the Bien Hoa air base during which he presented medals to eight US Air Force officers and noncommissioned officers, he declared to the press that "work has begun on construction of a fortified barrier south of the demilitarized zone and the barrier will run from the South China Sea to the mountains in the eastern sector of Quang Tri province." Although he denied the rumor that the entire population of the border area will be evacuated, he admitted that the government has a plan to evacuate approximately 25,000 people. The evacuation scheme may be used to scare the Buddhist population and drain the Buddhist strongholds of Quang Tri and Thua Thien of people who are against Ky.

At this moment, when the war is being escalated to a very dangerous point and there is no chance of negotiations between the US and Hanoi without cessation of bombing, hope of ending the war rests with the US attitude to the Buddhist call for a May 23 cease-fire. The US could use this opportunity to stop the bombing indefinitely as a gesture to the Buddhists. The US would gain tremendous prestige and moral power among the populations of both North and South Vietnam, 80 percent of whom are Buddhists. It may be only a dream that the new climate would lead to negotiations, but it is a dream that most Vietnamese and Buddhists would like to see come true.

Public TV and the Networks

by Brian Wenham

Britain is coming to the end of 10 years full-fledged competition between the BBC and Independent Television. A decade ago, Britain faced the United States' current problem the other way around. Public television, through the BBC, had long held the broadcasting monopoly; commercial interests had to fight to get on the air. Ten years later, few would dispute that British television has benefited from the introduction of the commercial service.

Initial hostility to commercialism meant the new network had much less free rein than the American commercial companies enjoy. Direct sponsorship of programs was barred from the start; the number of commercials to be broadcast in any given hour, and the frequency of their transmission, were limited. Parliament put an Authority at the head of the network, with power to influence both the pattern and nature of programming; the Authority has through the years made itself more and more felt. The licenses of all 14 program companies who go to make up the network are currently under review. The Authority is redrawing the franchise areas, to make sure at least one new company comes into the business; it is also taking the opportunity to press for less pap at prime time.

Nearly all companies, and certainly those with a large area to draw on for advertising revenue, have coined money for at least eight years. The size of the largest advertising revenues – between $20 million and $25 million – came as a shock even to the original entrants. Some in the early days got out of what looked like a shaky investment, just at the wrong time. The government and the Authority have contrived, by a system of taxes and levies, to take some of the cream off the cake. But a stake in British commercial television is still a good bet. This summer's relicensing has produced a large field of industrialists, financiers, publishers, newspaper proprietors, actors, actresses, journalists and straight television men, all eager to take the new contract or dislodge one of the existing companies. Independent Television has steered clear of the ex-

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treme banalities to which the American commercial networks sink in their search for larger audiences. This is, in part, a tribute to the safeguards built into the British system, and in part a consequence of having only one commercial network. Independent Television usually takes some 60 percent of the audience quite effortlessly, leaving the rest to the BBC. It does not need to get into the fight for ratings that seems to determine so much of what NBC, CBS and ABC present in the United States.

Britain's two television systems work in balance. There is considerable cross-fertilization of talent and techniques. The net effect is a television output that on its good nights is said to be unrivaled in the world; from the channels you can pick a documentary, a play, topical events, comedy, music, or a good series.

American television has the edge only in color and news. The BBC's fledgling second channel does not yet cover the whole country and will go to color this fall; the two major channels of BBC and Independent Television won't switch to color for a year or two. British television still clings to the formula of 15 minutes of shredded news which, even if repeated and updated throughout the evening, cannot match the breadth of a substantial nightly show. Longer coverage of news may come this year, but the principle of going even to a Huntley-Brinkley stage (which, looked at close to, is not really all that far) is not yet established. By way of compensation, British television abounds in programs of discussion and analysis, some of which appear nightly. But to some extent such programs shortchange the viewer. Even at their best they are not the same as covering the actual event, which is the one thing that is peculiarly televisual.

So it's sad that the present American debate about public television ducks this issue. The Carnegie Commission proposes to farm out news gathering among 20 key stations of the future, which will be equipped to handle everything in their area; but there is nothing to indicate how this will be pulled together. The commission hopes for "special news coverage unique to public television," but is likely to get parochial coverage and parochial distribution. There is no requirement under the plan for stations to take what is offered, and except for major events their temptation would be not to. Public television would be confined to the set-piece events, the State of the Union, congressional hearings, etc.

It seems curious that the Carnegie report wants money spent on "interconnection" yet should be so reluctant to see interconnection used to the full, for round-the-nation, networked news programs. Such programming would require public television sooner or later to look outside the United States also, with all the expense that involves. This is necessary if public television is to be a serious contender for audiences. Blanket networking of the sort practiced by the commercial companies gives no scope to local interests, other than the odd marketing report and weather outlook. But the alternative is not to make Kansas City king. The best available will have to get on the air, and quite frequently get on the air at the same time.

The commission seems to rest its case for maximum local autonomy on the assumption that there is a great fund of talent waiting to be tapped; that from Tacoma, Washington, to Tampa, Florida, would-be programmakers are knocking on the door. They may be, but it would be rash to bank on it. Television is a greedy medium. It can digest the effort of months in a matter of minutes. Serving up over 1,500 hours a year, which is what the commission expects, is bound to be immensely demanding of staff, and is bound too to require considerable coordination. The commission wants the new NET and its partner to provide a third of it, the 20 key stations – the same 20 who gather news – to find the other two-thirds. That works out at only an hour a week per station, but even that could mount up to a substantial investment of time, and of talent that could easily be spread too thin. There is a strong case for centralizing the public television programmakers into four or five units, and perhaps letting local talent devote some more time to the poor relation of the new system, actual educational television.

In the end it depends on how eager public television is to build an audience. It could choose just to service the minority who are deeply dissatisfied with the current commercial fare; or it could set about gaining converts. Actual conversion does not seem to rank high among the Carnegie Commission's objectives; perhaps it finds the very idea somewhat commercial.

The stress on local freedom of choice carries the danger of programming that is well-meaning but not well-made. The diffusion of production could lead to a plethora of tame discussion programs, that first refuge of the exhausted producer. It may be a refreshing change for a while to have the local intelligentsia chatting away in the corner of the room, but in the end something more is expected of television than a playpen for transient professors.

Public television must judge itself and be judged against the serious output of the commercial networks. There are few more dispiriting sights than the television program made only out of a worthy regard for the public interest. Increasingly, program-making becomes specialized, and less a matter for eager amateurs. The biggest flaw in the Carnegie report is that it gives too little control in its public television blueprint to the professionals, and overencourages the amateurs. The commercial managements, if they take the report literally, may be chuckling into their martinis – which would be a pity.

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A Kind of Survival

by Theodore Solotaroff

If you are interested in contemporary literature and are looking for intelligent direction, then this collection of George Steiner's essays and reviews is the book for you. Steiner has been mostly known for his two dazzlingly precocious works of scholarship, *Tolstoy or Dostoevsky* and *The Death of Tragedy*, but he now emerges as a cultural journalist who is as pertinent as he is erudite, a kind of latter-day Arthur Koestler. *Language and Silence* casts a bright and searching light into the murky disarray of current letters and literacy: it looks back to a darkness and disruption of Western culture that continues to plague and challenge the moral purpose of literature, among other fields, and it looks forward to possibilities of art and thought that may carry us beyond our broken heritage. It provides an articulate and comprehensive discussion of the impact of science and mass communications on the ability of language to describe the realities of the earth and the world. It takes up such matters as the wages of pornography, both for letters and for the private life of feeling, the sociological as well as artistic conditions responsible for the crisis of the novel, the efforts of scholars and translators to come to grips with such classics as Homer, the Bible, Shakespeare, and Racine, and the complacent assumptions of literary study that threaten to make it as relevant to modern experience as is coin-collecting or astrology. There is a sound introduction to those two obscure figures of our cultural future – Marshall McLuhan and Claude Lévi-Strauss – and a series of pieces on the relations between Marxism and literature that is free of the usual cant that one finds in most English and American journals. Steiner also manages to say something fresh about Thomas Mann and Kafka and something just about F. R. Leavis, and he places firmly such contemporary figures as Lawrence Durrell, Sylvia Plath, and Gunther Grass. All in all a remarkable coverage of topics and issues: the index of *Language and Silence* runs to 31 pages, from the mathematician Niels Henrik Abel to the novelist Stefan Zweig, and though padded by unnecessary and repetitious items, still gives you an idea of the library of references this young writer carries in his head.

Language and Silence
by George Steiner
Atheneum; $8)

But what carries the reader through *Language and Silence* and makes it cohere is something more than critical intelligence, range, and pertinence. Many of the pieces are written with the edge of feeling suggested by the subtitle – "Essays on language, literature, and the inhuman" – and the book as a whole is permeated with the sense of Steiner's effort – impressive, moving, and irritating – to carry on a cultural tradition that mostly went up in smoke 25 years ago at those terminals of modern culture known as Auschwitz and Dachau. In an essay titled, "A Kind of Survivor," the emotional and in some ways intellectual center of the book, Steiner tells us that his parents left Vienna in 1924, five years before he was born, and Paris in 1940: "So I happened not to be there when the names were called out." But though he has spent most of his life in America and in England, where he teaches at present, Steiner regards his way of being in the world, like his way of being a Jew, as indissolubly tied to "the black mystery of what happened in Europe," just as he derives his sense of vocation from the mighty line of acculturated Jewish intellectuals of Central Europe and from their common practice of what he calls "radical humanism."

Many of the strengths and defects of *Language and Silence* can be traced to this identification, which is all the more potent for being as much a repeated act of imagination and will as it is a natural carrying forward of a family background. To regard oneself as the heir of that extraordinary group of artists, scholars, and scientists means to take upon oneself an audacious, backbreaking, and momentous task. It means to place oneself in a line that includes Marx, Freud, and Einstein; Schoenberg, Kafka, and Wittgenstein; Heine, Hofmannsthal, Hermann Broch, and Walter Benjamin; Bergson, Proust, and Lévi-Strauss; Karl Kraus, Ernst Bloch, T. W. Adorno, Hannah Arendt. . . . the list goes on and on, a veritable pantheon of modern genius. It means to master the languages and literatures that extend from Budapest to Paris, to grasp the range of intel-

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lectual achievements that runs from Cantor's mathematics to Lukács' Marxism. It also means to take upon oneself the restatement and reliving of "an inheritance of humane striving, already done to death." Finally, it means to Steiner, I think, to stand in a deep sense for the whole generation of his peers – these children who did not survive, who left this great tradition bereft of its natural protégés, who make such a haunting absence today in the life of the European mind. I may be overstating the matter but I don't think so: there is a driving, obsessive quality to Steiner's acquisitiveness, a fever in his point of view which goes beyond curiosity and self-assertion. Here is the high heritage you have decimated, he seems to be saying, as he moves rapidly from Kafka to Hofmannsthal to Broch; here is the linguistic and literary fallout of your ires and terror, as he searches for the poisoned marrow of the German language; here are the deterrents of your humanism, as he raises over and over again the damning fact that

> ". . . The ultimate of political barbarism grew from the core of Europe. . . . Not only did the general dissemination of literary, cultural values prove no barrier to totalitarianism; but in notable instances the high places of humanistic learning and art actually welcomed and aided the new terror. . . . We know that some of the men who devised and administered Auschwitz had been taught to read Shakespeare or Goethe, and continued to do so."

Be that as it may, *Language and Silence* is everywhere pervaded by the "radical humanism" of those Central European Jews in whose name and spirit Steiner takes his stand and does his work. There is the "particular bias of rational feeling" which informs his manifold account of "The Retreat from the Word" that has taken place in science, the social sciences, history and philosophy, along with the rebellion against "verbal equivalence or concordance" in modern art and music, and the temptations of silence that literature has experienced in the face of the loss of expressive vocabulary produced by a kind of linguistic Gresham's law in which the debased verbal coin of politics and the mass media is driving out precise and vital speech. Or again, the European-Jewish enlightenment which eagerly took the whole body of Western culture as its province can be seen in Steiner's bold foray into recent scholarship on Homer, the command of Biblical scholarship found in his essay on "The Book," his variously informative ways of approaching Shakespeare. Or again, the ground of humane, civilized values that anchored the far-flung thought of Marx and Freud, Broch and Kafka, alike – desperately held, in each case, against the evidence of the inhuman that they themselves uncovered – is also apparent in Steiner's moral imagination, whether it turns upon the issues of the *Olympia Reader* or Jean-François Steiner's *Treblinka*. Or again, the freedom and anxiety of the Jewish outsider, the need to define himself in alien, if not hostile, circumstances that gives rise to a vision of creative possibilities and a flair for dramatic self-characterization found in the "experimental" work of a Schoenberg, a Karl Kraus, a Walter Benjamin, also clearly stimulates Steiner to envision a new tradition of prose, which he names "the Pythagorean genre," and to place himself generally and to perform on the frontiers of contemporary thought and sensibility.

But it remains to say that there is something "artificial" about this enterprise, as Steiner seems at one point to acknowledge himself. For, as one might suspect, anything as grand as Steiner's sense of vocation runs the risk of becoming grandiose, any mind as open to the range of cultural portents as his is can begin to appear portentous. At many more points than I can hope to detail here, *Language and Silence* promises more than it delivers, runs through more material than a paragraph, an essay, or a collection of assorted pieces can hope to do justice to. Though his preface asserts, for example, that literary criticism is "no longer a very interesting and responsible exercise" and that his essays are aimed in the direction of a "philosophy of language," I am hard put to see what this "philosophy" is: there are some scattered references to Wittgen-

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stein's and Broch's reflections on the limits of language, a tentative assent to the McLuhan apocalypse of the printed word, an interest in Lévi-Strauss and the work of structural linguistics, most of which bears a curious relation, to say the least, to Steiner's normative judgments about the vitality and morality of language, such as in his well-known essay about the impact of Nazism on German linguistics and literature.

Since Steiner is in fact writing literary criticism and not philosophy his formulations about "the inhuman," "the authority of silence" and so forth are often prey to a kind of cultural melodrama that he seems to be conducting under the name of "crisis," in which rhetoric often does the work of analysis:

> "Has our civilization, by virtue of the inhumanity it has carried out and condoned – we are accomplices to that which leaves us indifferent – forfeited its claims to that indispensable luxury which we call literature? Not forever, not everywhere, but simply in this time and place, as a city besieged forfeits its claims to the freedom of the winds and the cool of evening outside its walls."

To which there is no answer, of course, because there is no question. Even the imagery is imprecise to the point of meaninglessness, and the mentality behind it is merely grandiose and portentous. Of course, one can say that Steiner is writing at the emotional pitch of "a kind of survivor," but I think that he tends to exploit this situation – except when he directly confronts it – and I also think that a survivor of the tradition with which he identifies so proudly should be more firm with himself.

Steiner goes on to remark, "I am not saying that writers should stop writing. . . . I am asking whether they are not writing too much, whether the deluge of print in which we seek our deafened way is not itself a subversion of meaning." I would agree and I would recommend this wisdom back to its author. For reading through *Language and Silence*, I found myself thinking how much more language there was here than silence. In a really first-rate critical work one is always conscious of a silence, of the reserves of intelligence, learning, verbal power that lie behind what a T. S. Eliot, Walter Benjamin, or R. P. Blackmur chooses to say. I don't often get that deliberateness in Steiner; instead there is a kind of busyness and repetitiousness, the writer constantly running through his capital in his pressing need to explain, refer, display. The truth is simply that Steiner writes too much to be very convincing on the subject of silence, whether in its political or literary form. He is too anxious to be both *au courant* and *avant-garde* to make us experience the crisis in letters as a fact of his own feeling and style. I once asked the poet Irving Feldman if writing poetry was hard. "No, the writing is easy," he said. "It's the waiting that's hard." George Steiner has many gifts of mind and heart and he belongs, if anyone of his generation does, to the tradition of "radical humanism" that he describes in this book. But if he is to go as far as his mentors, I think he will need to learn to sit still and to be silent himself.

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Life's Madness

by Robert Coles

One of the ways psychiatrists have sorted themselves out in recent years has to do with the importance they give to concepts like "the normal," or "maturity" or "mental health." Some are dead serious about letting their patients and the public know what is abnormal or immature. On television they urge me to "fight mental illness," and though I am not exactly sure how to go about doing it, I am certainly left with the idea that there *is* such a thing as mental illness, that there is such a thing as its presumed opposite, mental health.

The Politics of Experience
by R. D. Laing
(Pantheon; $4.95)

In contrast stand those psychiatrists who question the entire practice of calling one or another variation in human behavior "sick" or evidence of "disease." Thomas Szasz in this country has made his position quite clear by the title, let alone the content, of his book *The Myth of Mental Illness*. The English psychiatrist R. D. Laing has come to the issue from a somewhat different angle – he is less interested in legal problems than Szasz and is much more the philosopher. In one of his earlier books *(The Divided Self)* he wrote as follows:

> "A man who prefers to be dead rather than Red is normal. A man who says he has lost his soul is mad. A man who says he *is* a machine is 'depersonalized' in psychiatric jargon. A man who says that Negroes are an inferior race may be widely respected. A man who

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says his whiteness is a form of cancer is certifiable.

"A little girl of seventeen in a mental hospital told me she was terrified because the Atom Bomb was inside her. That is a delusion. The statesmen of the world who boast and threaten that they have Doomsday weapons are far more dangerous, and far more estranged from 'reality' than many of the people on whom the label 'psychotic' is affixed."

That book and a later one (*The Self and Others*) demonstrated that Laing is a physician and psychoanalyst who can easily come to terms with the complicated thinking of Sartre, Heidegger and Binswanger. He has been trained to place people in psychiatric categories but he finds the practice worse than useless, in fact an insulting and gratuitous way of ignoring both the person, who is called a "patient," and his ideals or convictions, so easily dismissed as "delusions" or "problems." For Laing, as for other so-called "existential" analysts, what psychiatrists are busy classifying and labeling is actually a "false self," presented to the world by a man or woman who has learned from long standing, nerve wracking experience the futility of anything but disguise, deception and escape. In contrast, somewhere in anyone who has managed to survive infancy, there resides what Laing calls the "inner self," the anxious, frightened person's sense of what he "really" is, what he wishes he might more solidly be, what he once thought he could be – alive, whole, secure, trusting, trusted, whatever. (The word is not the issue, and in any event words can only suggest the intricacies and ironies of experience.)

Laing would see the most angry, withdrawn or incomprehensible of psychotics as a person who is struggling to make his thoughts and feelings known to a disbelieving, unreliable and impassive world, more bent on demanding compliance than enabling each man to stumble upon and seek out his own kind of vision or faith. What do we do with the radical doubts of a man who distrusts the words and postures of his fellow men, who uses a different syntax, carries himself in

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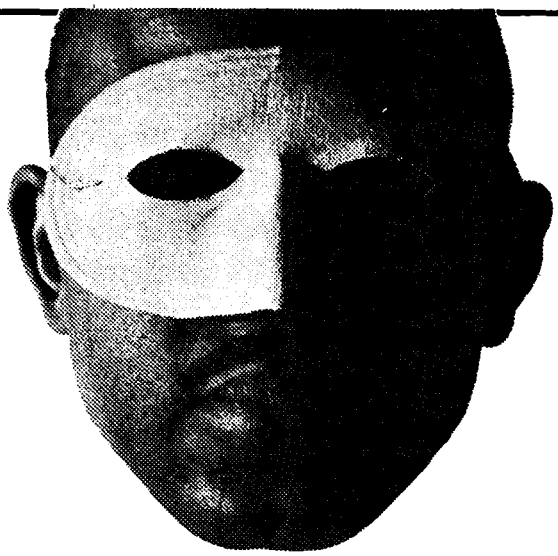

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By FRANTZ FANON. $1.95

a different way, and finds in the sights and sounds of his private world a bit less of the cruelty and the cant that "we" take in our stride? Laing says we call him "crazy," call him "ill," fall back on our laws, and send him "away," where he stays until he learns to change his ways and abide by ours. ("The psychiatrist, as *ipso facto* sane, shows that the patient is out of contact with him. The fact that he is out of contact with the patient shows that there is something wrong with the patient, but not with the psychiatrist.")

Laing has now published a new book, *The Politics of Experience*, which contains a collection of essays published before in medical or philosophical journals and various quarterlies. As a psychiatrist I once again find his writing quite literally stunning. I am overpowered by the challenges he dares make to what has become a rather conventional profession, very much the property of (and a source of solace to) the upper middle-class American, this century's *civis Romanus*. To Laing, we psychiatrists are something else, too: willing custodians, who for good pay agree to do the bidding of society by keeping tab on various "deviants," and in the clutch "taking care" of them – the double meaning of the verb being exactly to the point.

There seems to be something seriously wrong with Dr. Laing: he doesn't believe that the educated, literate and often enough psychoanalyzed Americans and Englishmen who read his books are without exception alert, vital and honest people. As a matter of fact he asserts that they commonly are the dead rather than the quick, well behaved rather than alive. In a word, they do not experience – "life," one another, the ridiculous and the sublime that the world offers so freely.

Laing's new book is organized around a discussion of "experiences," whether they be called psychotherapeutic, schizophrenic, or transcendental. Even more, he asks the reader to experience this book, to meet rather than understand at a distance the mind of R. D. Laing – a doctor, a writer, a human being trying to live enthusiastically and suffer honorably. What troubles Laing, however, is his conviction that he will fail, that deaf ears and blind eyes are everywhere, particularly

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among those who declare books "interesting" and those who "treat" what they call "syndromes." Intellectuals, he feels, turn the writer's passion into academic capital, ideas that come and go. Psychiatrists convert the experience of talking with another person, sweating it out with him, into one more icy, abstract "process."

We have, then, a psychiatrist who doesn't seem to distinguish between sanity and madness. On the contrary, he appears to be worried about us, the "well adjusted" men and women that society values so very much. He sees us educating our children "to lose themselves and to become absurd, and thus to be normal." Then he adds: "Normal men have killed perhaps 100,000,000 of their fellow normal men in the last fifty years." As I read the book I kept thinking of Auden's poem *The Unknown Citizen,* where the same painful message is spoken. Step by step, year by year, we make sure a child falls in line, so that when he becomes grown-up we call him "mature," meaning he will follow the leader, who in turn follows the polls. In Auden's words we will be able to say "he worked in a factory and never got fired," and he wasn't "odd in his views," and "our social psychology workers found that he was popular with his mates and liked a drink," and "his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way." Naturally, "when there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went." At the end the poet asks: "Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd. Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard."

Laing also despairs, and tells why in this book. We are in the same sinking ship, oppressor and victim. Men of success live haunted and frightened by the climb they have made over the minds, bodies and rights of others. What they did to their neighbor can be done to them – and that goes for nations as well as individuals. As for the "failures," they have their "problems" too, everything from hunger to the sense of worthlessness "we" make sure "they" feel. Laing devotes a whole chapter to "us" and "them," to the ways we cut off others, deny them in desperate spite the humanity we ourselves have lost. He also insists that psychiatrists have allowed themselves to be separated from their patients, to categorize them rather than learn from them and with them, to use "the economic metaphor," so that one hears physicians talk of emotions "invested" and "objects" gained or lost. In sum, because of their emphasis on "function," on getting people "going" or "adjusted" (to what?) Laing views his colleagues as captives of their own amoral pragmatism.

Dr. Laing is no glib and smart-aleck critic, masquerading as a psychiatrist. He has a good deal of clinical research to his credit, much of it done with schizophrenics and their families. (His work is described in two books, each written with a colleague: *Reason and Violence* and *The Families of Schizophrenics.*) He sees schizophrenia as a "special strategy that a person invents in order to live in an unlivable situation." He does not know why some people (rather than others) feel so utterly, decisively thwarted, but he wants insanity understood as an effort to reach out, to break out; and further, he wants it understood as potentially something more, something "transcendental." Madness is not only confusion and loss, an inner world of ideas, voices, shapes and impulses asserting itself like never before; madness is a radical departure, and Laing sees it as "potentially liberation and renewal."

It is refreshing to read his discussion of insanity, even if one does not accept his viewpoint completely. He is not out to blame anyone, or call people thinly disguised (psychiatric) names. He isn't hammering away at the weakness, the morbidity, the deviance of people. Nor does he glorify or romanticize madness; he wants to understand it, to see it for the universal and quite human condition that it is. He knows what many of his colleagues think, how they scan minds for "disorders of thinking" and sign commitment papers, one after another, so that patients – they are sick, sick, sick – will get "treatment." He asks what kind of treatment, and from whom. Will the psychiatrist under the best circumstances be someone highly trained but ultimately condescending, more interested in getting the patient to be like others than in finding out

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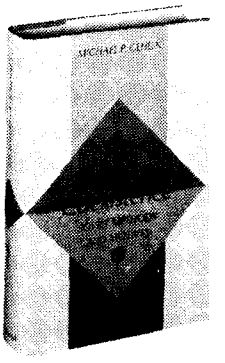

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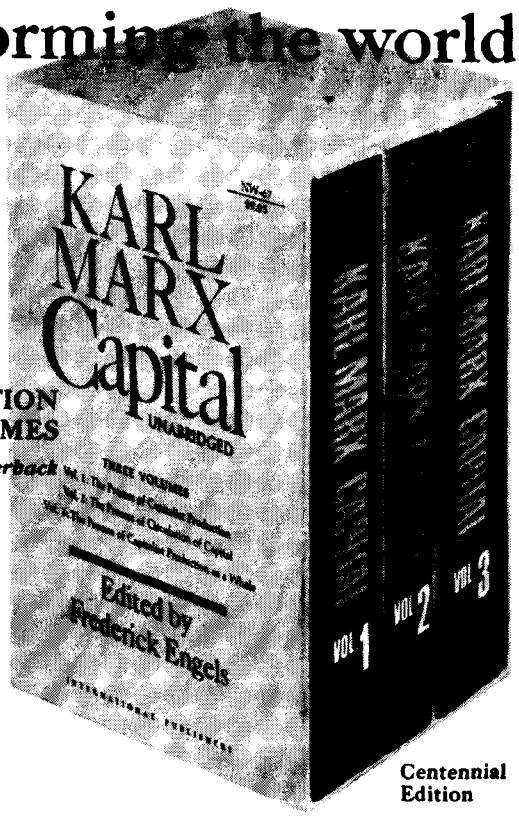

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where he himself is going, and would like to go?

Yet, language itself fails us when we try to distinguish the "individual" from others, from the "social." On the first day of life a child begins to find out where and when he was born. The way he is handled, clothed and fed, the nature and amount of food he gets, his mother's moods, worries, fears – all that and more begins to affect him, and urge on him what I suppose could be called "conformity." Then he enters the backyard, and the neighborhood, and later the school – where he learns to accept this and forego that. I know of no society where children are not "indoctrinated," that is "brought up" and in the course of things subjected to some kind of conformist restraint.

Since Dr. Laing realizes all that, the reader must ask why he as a psychiatrist objects so strenuously to what he knows to some extent is inevitable. As a matter of fact the book's real value stands or falls on whether the author makes his criticisms unqualified to the point of irrelevance. Will we hear once again, and from a psychiatrist this time, that children are by nature *only* sensitive, kind or honorable, and destined to remain so were it not for the thieves and cheats who teach them and rule them, let alone bring them into the world? Are we to understand that things have to be pulled inside out, that madness is sanity and sanity the worst kind of madness? Are the murky existentialist words going to replace the dumb psychiatric ones – say "authenticity" for "mental health"? Do we have yet another author who tears down everything around with a certain vindictive relish but has not a damn thing to offer the millions who don't read him, who live outside of his coterie and whom he can only grant the scorn of his pity?

In my opinion, Laing comes off very well on such questions. He acknowledges the demonic and chaotic in man, and he does not try to make a religion out of psychosis. ("Certain transcendental experiences. . . . I am not saying, however, that psychotic experience necessarily contains this element more manifestly than sane experience.") In other words, he holds to the

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reality of madness, but insists upon its integrity – and so emerges as only a man, with precisely that "status," a knowing and searching human being rather than a self-important doctor.

Unquestionably, he is thoroughly dissatisfied with what 20th-century industrial society does to the minds of people; and he is equally unhappy with the way psychiatrists generally manage to avoid facing sticky and controversial problems like that one. He will not have his profession used to "cure" those who dare question social or political absolutes, and even more radically, he is willing to find madness – in some cases – a necessary way station or a point of departure in a spiritual voyage all too few people care or dare to make, particularly since if they do the middle-class world will shun them, mock them and when they make enough "trouble," cart them off.

At the end of the book Laing demonstrates what he means by offering us first a "case-history" and then in a chapter called "The Bird of Paradise," his own flight of fancy and terror. These last pages do not read easily, and at times I could not understand what was before me, which may be the author's point about me, you, and him – that in today's world we barely can hold on to the senses we are still permitted, let alone call them ours or convey their "meaning" to others. In any event the book as a whole presents an exceptionally courageous psychiatrist who is willing to plumb his own depths and challenge head-on the hypocrisy and duplicity of his own profession and the larger society of which it is so prominent a part. I can only hope that he will be heard and heard respectfully. I can only further hope that those who disagree will spare him and the rest of us those dishonest and contemptible *ad hominem* remarks that some psychiatrists reserve for any and all "opposition." (So-and-so has this kind of problem, Laing has that kind, and they need more analysis, more of a "going over.") Nor do I think Dr. Laing deserves the eager company of the psychoanalytically disenchanted, a growing minority in America today. It seems to me that he is trying to give the essence of Freud's journey (not the dead-end streets that he like all men walked) a particular kind of historical, political and philosophical perspective. I do not think he means to deny the validity of the analytic method; quite the contrary, it has enabled much of his vision. The point anyway is not to pit views against one another, but find whatever coherence possible out of them all – without resort to ideological squabbles. Freud called himself a conquistador, and if the bookkeepers and bureaucrats have now descended upon the psychoanalytic "movement" in droves to claim his mantle, all the more reason for a man like Laing to stand fast as the psychoanalyst he is.

When I finished this unusual and troubling book, I thought of Bob Dylan and the loneliness he has described squeezing at people, the things they do to distract themselves, and the obligation to be compassionate that anyone who would criticize them must feel. I think that Laing shares a similar sense of horror, a similar spirit of generosity, and not always do we find in one man that range of sensibility.

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by Stanley Kauffmann,
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Out of India

by John Gale

R. K. Narayan is a lovely writer: pure, quiet, and with no need to strain or glitter. Inevitability pervades *The Vendor of Sweets*, his latest novel about the imaginary town of Malgudi: you feel that none of it could be other than it is. It is wise, funny, and poetic, touched now and again with melancholy.

The Vendor of Sweets
by R. K. Narayan
(Viking; $4.95)
Delinquent Chacha
by Ved Mehta
(Harper & Row; $3.95)

Jagan, the principal character, with his "simple living and high thinking, as Gandhi has taught us," runs his sweet shop conscientiously: never is his ghee made with anything but the purest butter. He has fads and fetishes about food, teeth-cleaning, and clothes, and is quite often "racked with the problem of national improvement in

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various directions." But deep in him there is acceptance.

Jagan's wife has been dead several years, and all his love now goes to his son, Mali, who is anything but a comfort to him. Mali drops his studies and says he is going to write a novel in order to win a prize of 25,000 rupees. Mali doesn't write the novel, but he takes money from his father's secret cache in the loft in order to buy an air ticket and clothes for America. Jagan never reprimands his son, and is terrified and sad whenever the boy is displeased with him.

From America Jagan receives a stream of letters, and with pride he bores his acquaintances with the facts of that far-off country. At last his son returns full of Western conceits and know-how, bringing with him a Korean-American girl, who may or may not be his wife, and a mysterious apparatus in a box that turns out to be an electronic story-writing machine. Jagan, with his beautiful memories of his own courtship and marriage according to Hindu custom, is bewildered and upset by Mali and the girl. Are they or are they not married? But he is never bitter and almost never judging: he tries to understand, while remaining close to his own Gods and rituals.

Almost every page is human and forgiving: you feel the crumbling age of India and the heat, overlaid with a sort of helplessness that is fatalistic but not despairing. Only at the very end, it seems to me, does the sense of inevitability desert this fine book: the ending is abrupt and open-ended; almost hurried. I should have liked to see the story a little further resolved.

Jagan is a lovely man: his hopes and anxieties, his humor and sense of beauty, are very Indian; yet they are also universal.

Ved Mehta's *Delinquent Chacha* does not compete with Mr. Narayan, nor does it try to. It has charm and it is often funny. Can it be labeled a comic *tour de force?* In the end, I think, not quite: to me, the joke is a little too open and, at times, a little too obvious. It is well done, but one never gets a real surprise.

Delinquent Chacha is the story of an endearing, improvident Indian, irresponsible father of many children, who

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"He tells his story modestly . . . simply, too, writing, presumably as he talks, in the low-keyed idiom of the campus . . . [with] a born storyteller's ability to keep the reader on the edge of his seat. —George H. T. Kimble

by everybody who, from the first page, shares Mr. Levitt's experience of what it was like . . .

. . . to be hailed as *broo* (brother) and offered the potent *pombe* by the friendly villagers

. . . to teach boys (big ones who looked over twenty years old and little ones who seemed not even ten) the meaning of a day, a year, a season

. . . to coach Headmaster Twakatulu for his promotion exams

. . . to visit the home of his star pupil, Fedson, and meet his father and three mothers

. . . to find his students huddled around a small lamp long after curfew, working on their sums

. . . to hear a teacher say earnestly, about witchcraft, "But it's true, *broo*, it's really true"

. . . to watch the boys' eyes light up at the news that each would have his *own* copy of *Gulliver's Travels* for two weeks

☛ *Africa Report* says:
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To read it is to be there. It is told with simplicity, warmth, and remarkable power to evoke people and place. As Mr. Twakatulu would say, it is "very, very."

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yearns for the departed British and has no greater ambition than to turn himself into an English gentleman. After landing – and then losing – a tasty part in a film, Chacha arrives, penniless, in London, with the vague hope of enrolling, aged 47, as an undergraduate at Oxford.

His nephew, Mohan (known to his uncle as Kaka), has already received this letter: "Send money from your scholarship. Meet Delinquent Chacha London 10 p.m. All-India Taj Mahal Curry, Chutney, and Soup Restaurant off Shaftesbury Avenue three days hence." The two meet, and Chacha is indignant that Kaka knows nothing of the tailors of Savile Row or of the extraordinary carpets of Harrods.

Poor Chacha has to take a job as porter of the All-India Taj Mahal Curry, Chutney, and Soup Restaurant. He sleeps in a terrible broom closet. "Oh, Kaka," says Chacha, "who would have thought it? But don't look like that. It won't be so bad. . . . In no time I'll have enough money to pay my twenty-one debt to Lalaji and buy my passage home, and I will be known all over New Delhi as 'England-returned'."

Chacha tries, but fails, to become a member of the Royal Colonial Club of the British Empire near Piccadilly, where he always signs the visitors' book "Delinquent Chacha, CMG" (Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George). One day in the club, Chacha, too, looks back on his Hindu marriage: but his memories are not beautiful, like Jagan's, for he believes that his shrewish wife, whose father snared Chacha by fraud, is the cause of all his misfortune.

Despite his fate as a restaurant porter, standing in the cold and opening the doors of taxis, poor Chacha persuades himself that he is well off in the Great Wen of London. And that CMG in the club visitors' book pays off when he is invited to be a guest speaker at a Model United Nations at Oxford. This is the signal for penniless Chacha to order on credit from a tailor a terrifying number of mortar boards, crimson gowns and purplish-blue suits.

Chacha's speech is a fiasco: in his naïveté he reveals almost all, and is shown up as an impostor by the chairman of the Pakistani delegation. Chacha has to stand trial for defrauding the tailor and for "allegedly dressing above his station and going around with a handle to his name" (but not, though the case must surely be *sub judice*, before earning an article in his defense in the editorial pages of *The Observer*). After dismissing his defending counsel halfway through his trial, Chacha elects to defend himself, and succeeds triumphantly: he finds himself a free man. Back at the All-India Taj Mahal Curry, Chutney, and Soup Restaurant, he begins to dictate to Kaka a letter to the Queen. . . .

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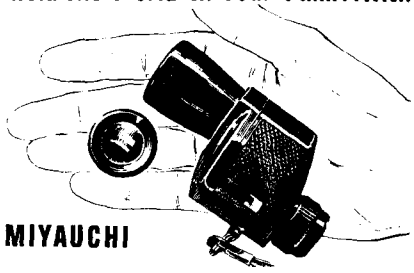

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After Armageddon

The War Game (Pathé-Contemporary)

Because it is "unthinkable," nuclear warfare and its aftermath have been "unseeable" in the cinema. In Stanley Kramer's *On the Beach*, The Bomb tastefully explodes off-screen, and at the end Down Under's "victims" are allowed suicide pills rather than face the dreary prospect of that slow moving radioactive cloud from Up Over. But now comes a brilliant young English director named Peter Watkins with a fifty-minute dress rehearsal for Hell entitled *The War Game*, and finally we have the full physical and psychological horror at Armageddon and After.

This extraordinary documentary was produced and then banned by the BBC and it is not hard to see why. Shot in forceful *cinema verité* style, *The War Game* isn't for the family telly: it is a disturbing fantasy of social disintegration that looks too much like the real thing. The plot line goes like this: due to a sudden escalation in the Vietnam war, the Russians seal off Berlin and the Americans fire a tactical nuclear weapon from a NATO base. The Soviet response is a massive strike of IRBM's upon the nuclear umbrella of Western Europe. An off-target missile explodes near Kent and the citizens suddenly become the unwilling subjects of *The War Game*. Almost totally unprepared for the emergency by the government information services, most of the people die during the blast, shock wave or the massive fire storm. Those who survive, as Khrushchev remarked, will envy the dead. The last half of the film shows how, over a three-month period citizens become cave dwellers. The final scene seems drawn from *Lord of the Flies*, but with distinct and improving differences. In Golding's novel, the starchy British officer confronts the savage and silent schoolboys and chuckles uneasily about the "games" that these British boys have been "playing" while their elders went about the more meaningful action of World War III. In *The War Game*, a stubbly Anglican priest with a soiled

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collar and a bunch of cherubic and grimy kids are interviewed amidst the ruins that shelter them at Christmas time. The priest tells us that children are the saddest products of nuclear civilization. And when the kids are asked about their future they tonelessly reply: "I don't want to be nothing." *Lord of The Flies* is effective but sentimental parable. *The War Game* is harsh reality; the priest understands the kids but his sympathy is wasted; the children react with a totally hostile rejection of the adult world.

Admittedly there is a stagy flavor to this sequence – *Silent Night* is even heard on the sound track to underline things – and yet it works. For after fifty minutes of brutal documentation, the audience needs something theatrical to take just a slight curse off the rest of the film. For as well as a Radical, Watkins is a compassionate and calm Classicist who knows the proportion of things; time and again he overcomes the central problem of the "atrocity" film: when to let the audience breathe a bit before the next escalation in horror is revealed. In *Night and Fog*, Alain Resnais intercut pastoral color sequences of abandoned concentration camps with black and white footage of the past atrocities committed on the now overgrown premises; poetic realism made the intolerable easier to bear and all the more horrible. In like manner, Watkins keeps *The War Game* from turning into an interminable dirge that the audience will reject. But despite the stagy ending of the film, despite the satiric "interviews with responsible public figures," and despite the (visually) restful black and white texts that cut into the worst of horrors, Watkins' message comes through relentlessly: there may *not* always be an England.

The first (prenuclear) half of *The War Game* has sharp-focus photography, fast-paced editing, and an urgent, metallic narrator's voice reeling off the grim events: escalation, evacuation and panic. Then comes the blast, shock wave and fire storm and Watkins somehow manages to *suggest horror* rather than *show* it: burned flesh is kept to a minimum and the actual atomic explosion is never seen. . . . And then we have the second half of *The War*

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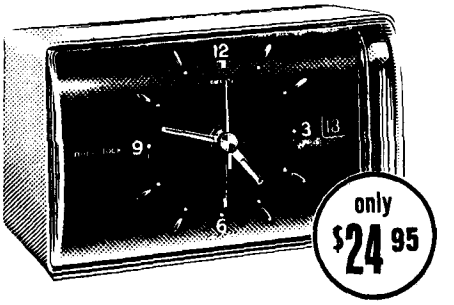

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Game: grainier photography and darker film stock, slower pace to the editing, and even the metallic narrator softens his voice in compassion.

It is a disordered world that we encounter now: a macabre man appears wearing a clean pair of glasses, a grimy but neatly blocked hat – and a black face. Most of the "survivors" are silent and shaky – and gradually losing their sense of human identity. Significantly only two people are identified by name in the film (even stills of LBJ and Kosygin are identified as "The American President" and "Soviet Premier"). The first person so individualized is a "Dr. Peter Thornley," and we see him moments before the missile explodes near Kent. Later, near the end of the film, we see a confused matron clutching a bag of food which she has looted from a surplus storage center; she and a mob of similar "Mums" have killed the soldiers guarding the place. The narrator informs us: "This is Mrs. Joyce Fisher. She was a housewife." Suddenly we remember that these disordered objects we have been observing are "people." Somewhere between "Dr. Thornley" and "Mrs. Fisher," civilization has disappeared.

A particularly horrifying instance of personal disorder comes when Watkins pans his camera in close-up along an endless row of blackened corpses and then pulls the camera up and back to reveal a family group, also black and motionless, sitting on a curb at the end of the row of bodies. For fifteen seconds the father, mother, son, and daughter are a *tableau morte* – then the daughter makes a small flicker of movement as she pulls on her mother's sleeve for comfort. The mother does not respond and the rejected child stops her feeble action at once and rejoins her wax-figure family. This terrifying and oddly beautiful scene brings to mind a particularly ominous device which Watkins uses to end certain scenes in the film. Instead of the expected dissolve or fade-out, the frame is frozen in a still photograph, giving a memorial tone to the scene – the effect is that we are looking at a Doomsday Album of Unfond Memories. Which brings to mind the following fantasy: the detailed realism, the information the narrator endlessly supplies, the wax-figure family and the "freeze-frame" technique somehow suggest that what we are witnessing has *actually* happened – that the BBC has unearthed a time capsule deposited as a final *memento mori* by a pre-Ice Age civilization that bore a strong resemblance to our own.

Finally, historical context makes this film all the more remarkable. The collapse of radicalism after The Establishment accepted Aldermaston makes *The War Game* unusual enough in terms of British society. *Blow-Up* explains the Now Generation and Antonioni wears an electric shirt while damning Alienation; *The War Game* is a Jeremiad that sermonizes without sanctimony and Watkins dresses in workman's blue while asking a final question: can proliferation and the threat of World War III be stopped in time?

The Pepsi-Banana Generation that will soon make up half of America would have it otherwise: Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out of Vietnam and global responsibility – too often this is the *mantra* they chant behind hostile, painted faces. It is especially the youth of our country, then, who ought to see this remarkable movie – as much for its message as its life-affirming spirit of responsibility for the next generation. And it is equally important for the liberal intellectuals of the Old Left to see it – they still are ideological and financial mainstays of most of today's activism in America.

Indeed, a liberal intellectual has made the most cogent remarks on *The War Game*, namely Kenneth Tynan in *The Observer:* "It may be the most important film ever made. We are always being told that a work of art cannot change the course of history, I think this one might. It should be screened everywhere on earth." Aside from Mr. Tynan's "may be" which I would omit. I am in full agreement.

MICHAEL C. D. MACDONALD

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Digest That!

Sirs:

Although your editorial note, "Digest That!" (April 29) points out well the financial pressure Readers Digest Association, Inc., is using to induce college newspapers to take its campus supplement, *Campus Courier*, it fails to mention the most serious issue – the threat to the editorial autonomy of college newspapers posed by *Campus Courier*.

Despite the clause in the *Campus Courier* franchise agreement allowing

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Theodore Solotaroff *is the editor of* The New American Review, *a new literary quarterly which will appear soon.* Robert Coles, *a contributing editor of this journal, is the author of* Children of Crisis: A Study of Courage and Fear, *which will be published by Little, Brown on May 23.* John Gale *is a reporter for* The Observer *and author of* Clean Young Englishman, *published in this country by Coward-McCann.* Michael D.C. Macdonald *is a story editor for a motion picture producer.*

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a college editor to refuse to distribute any issue of the supplement he finds objectionable, the peculiar budgeting situation of most college newspapers makes this option meaningless. For once a college editor has agreed to take the supplement, his college administration, in most cases the publisher of the paper, will anticipate in his budget the revenue arising from the distribution of *Campus Courier*. Should he later turn down an issue of the supplement, he will lose the anticipated funds; and with a reduced income, he will have to print fewer pages of his newspaper. Because of administrative supervision of the budget, it is unrealistic to expect many editors to take this path.

Moreover, as a paper begins to depend upon *Campus Courier* for annual revenue, its college administration may decide to reduce its own financial support of the paper. Hence, it will become even more dependent upon *Campus Courier* for revenue to publish; and the ability to refuse objectionable issues of the supplement will be even further limited.

In this way, a college editor may find his paper gradually slipping out of his control – into the hands of the Readers Digest Association, Inc.

Robert A. Gross
General Secretary
U. S. Student
Press Association

The War

Sirs:

A "well done" on the note "Conscience and the War" appearing April 15. It presents sound questions, asking only a course of action that would be beneficial to all parties and institutions for whom it is addressed.

I presume I am the Marine to whom the article refers: And in my case the Judge has asked the Marine Corps to present a written statement regarding the logic of their (the MC's) absolute position, the value to be gained by refusing to acknowledge my beliefs. My commanding officer, the adjutant and the senior enlisted man here have all expressed misgivings about the action being directed by their superiors.

I am already restricted to my barracks so that I will not and can not express any of my views in public. I suspect I will soon be imprisoned so that I can not write such things as this. It is so ironic. I am not fighting against this country, I am fighting for it. For years my ambitions have been to serve it in the diplomatic corps. Yet if the MC pursues its present course I'll be able to do nothing more than serve as a burden to the country, in a jail, and surely never acquire a position that would be of more than nominal value to our society.

Oh, I can rattle on about myself, many others that I personally know who are experiencing similar problems, about the Nuremberg decisions, the taxpayers' dollar, about the religious or political implications, or lack of justice, but this is not necessary, for the sheer call to logic presented in your editorial should win the assent of reasonable minds.

Barry S. Laing
Great Lakes, Ill.

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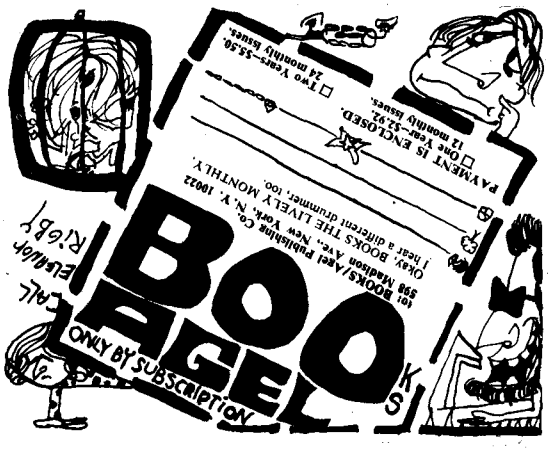
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Editor-Publisher of a Monthly Mind-Expander

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—Chicken Art and Cop Art.
—Paul Krassner's parents: "Our Son the Realist."
—Sheila Campion lets the fellow sit next to the window on the train.
—McLuhan-Fiore's "The Medium is the Massage" is to books what Godard's "Breathless" was to movies: A dramatic innovation.
—"When I am 12 years, I suddenly know I don't have to eat . . . I just dance."
—The book that shook up 70 Manhattanites.
—Tally Brown lives under the George Washington Bridge, where at five o'clock every afternoon you can see the moon above and the sun below.
—Rex Reed profiles Rex Reed: "The only two people I ever interviewed whom I detested were Barbra Streisand and Antonioni, who I also exposed as two of the biggest phonies of our era."
—Andy Warhol is making his film version of Snow White, with Donyale Luna, the $60-an-hour Negro model, playing Miss White.
—Another BOOKS exclusive: The Tale of the Repositioner.
—Transcript of 10-year-old Lesley Downey being murdered on the Moors.
—Clay Felker, Book Week supervisor: "I'm appalled at the junk the publishers are putting out. There's never the promise of a good book."
—"Dear BOOKS the Lively One: Do you know if Emily Post has suggestions on what to serve when I have guests over to watch the Vietnam war on TV?"
—Humphry Osmond, Princeton's psychedelic expert: "Not too long in the future vast groups will have to be suspended, and they might as well be suspended with happy thoughts."
—Professor Marcuse, "the most beautiful man in America today."
—Eric Hoffer, the true believer: "The Negro revolution is a fraud. It has no faith in the character and potentialities of the Negro masses."
—Idaho's homosexual scandals, "The Boys of Boise."
—Last known photograph of God.
—Susan Sontag: "I am not sure that literature should be studied in a university. It doesn't seem to me that being an English major signifies anything respectable."
—The grains in a piece of plywood were used by John Cage as suggestions for his latest piece.
—Susan Sheehan: "'Ten Vietnamese' is my first book, so I expected its publication to be a festive occasion. But all I heard from the Knopf office was what the discount price was. It's all been very disappointing."
—In a midnight carriage ride through Central Park, Marshall McLuhan "coached" Pamela Tiffin for her bitch role in the Broadway revival of "Dinner at Ate."
—The Carnegie Corporation removed from a recent study its researchers' concensus that ETV is a sinking ship.
—Sports Illustrated loses lots of subscribers when its cover shows a pretty girl.
—Mark ("Rush to Judgment") Lane's next book will be on the removal of Japanese-Americans from West Coast cities during WWII.
—The greatest actress in America, Elsie Downey.
—John Henry Faulk: "Americans must clearly see the parallel between the hideous act of the Nazis at Lidice and our action in Vietnam's Iron Triangle, where we moved people out of the only homes they had ever known and then systematically created craters where there had once been cities."
—Jim Bishop, the celebrated journalist: "Unless we know some of the answers about JFK's assassination, we shouldn't be asking the questions."
—W. W. Norton's winning bid for Dean Acheson's autobiography: $200,000. The second highest bid was $67,500.
—Dick Cavett, the new comic, is a Yale graduate, handsome, skinny, and often mistaken for Twiggy.

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—Graffiti in an East Village men's room: "We are the people our parents warned us about."
—The wind's in the willows; pass it on.
—James Jones' "Go to the Widow-Maker" revives the probability that Columbus was Jewish.
—On the morning Valerie Jeanne Percy was murdered, the Chicago Tribune Books Today section was commenting on another murder [JFK's]: ". . . someone gets away with murder almost every day, so it's nothing that ought to cause panic in the streets."
—Helen Gurley Brown: "Why does everything have to be *good?* Can't some things just exist for their own pleasure?"
—The Bernard Geis Novelist's Survival Kit. (It's already given us "Valley of the Dolls.")
—"Village Voice is not the great American novel."
—Jacques Ellul (whom Mailer gives for Christmas) explains why men constantly turn to the State for the solutions of problems "that the State could not solve if it tried."

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